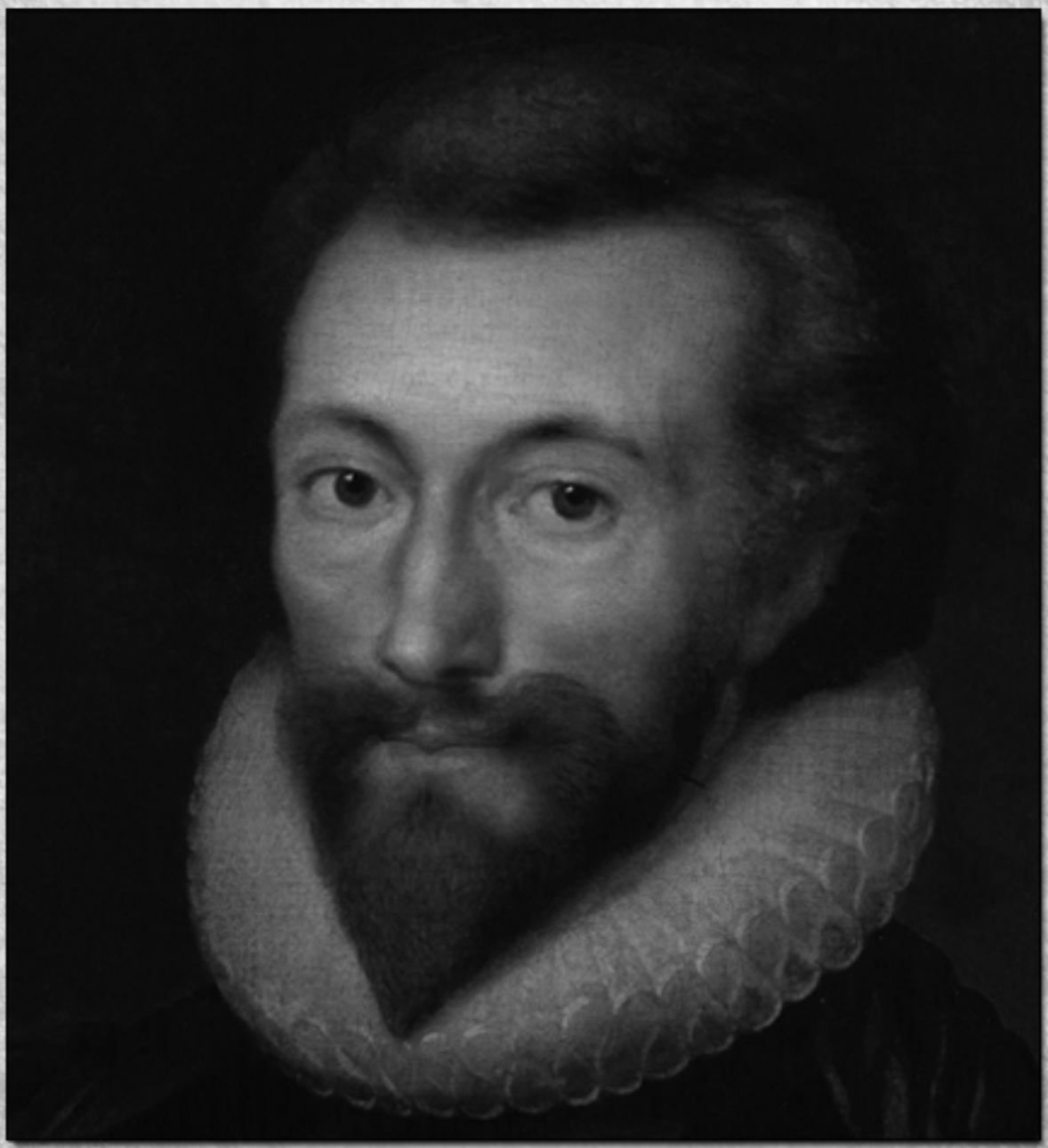
DELPHI POETS SERIES

JOHN DONNE



DELPHI CLASSICS

DELPHI POETS SERIES

JOHN DONNE

(1572-1631)

Contents

The Poetry Collections

SONGS AND SONNETS
ELEGIES
DIVINE POEMS
HOLY SONNETS
OTHER DIVINE POEMS
SATIRES
MARRIAGE SONGS
VERSE LETTERS
EPICEDES AND OBSEQUIES
EPIGRAMS
INFINITATI SACRUM
THE ANNIVERSARIES
LATIN POEMS
DOUBTFUL VERSES

The Poems

LIST OF POEMS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

LIST OF POEMS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

The Prose

BIATHANATOS
PSEUDO-MARTYR
IGNATIUS HIS CONCLAVE
DEVOTIONS UPON EMERGENT OCCASIONS
PARADOXES
PROBLEMS

The Letters

LIST OF LETTERS

The Biographies

THE LIFE OF DR. JOHN DONNE by Izaak Walton
JOHN DONNE by Arthur Symons
JOHN DONNE by Robert Lynd

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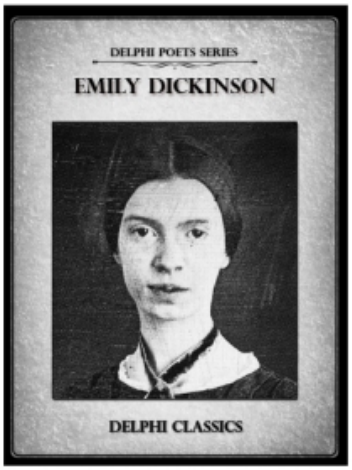

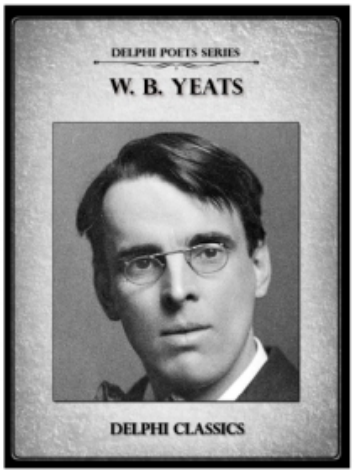

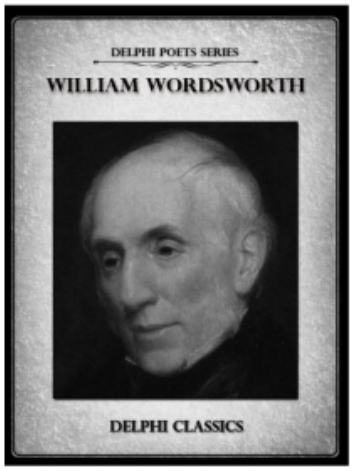

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DELPHI POETS SERIES

JOHN DONNE

By Delphi Classics, 2012

NOTE

When reading poetry on an eReader, it is advisable to use a small font size, which will allow the lines of poetry to display correctly.

The Poetry Collections

Bread Street, London — Donne's birthplace

London in Donne's time

SONGS AND SONNETS

John Donne is now generally considered the most prominent member of what would later be termed the Metaphysical poets - a phrase coined in 1781 by the critic Dr Johnson. Previously the poet John Dryden had written of Donne in 1693 as affecting "the metaphysics, not only in his satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign; and perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy, when he should engage their hearts, and entertain them with the softnesses of love." In response to this comment, Dr Johnson wrote in his *Life of Cowley* that at the beginning of the seventeenth century there "appeared a race of writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets". The phrase caught on and critics have ever since referred to Donne and fellow poets such as Andrew Marvell and George Herbert in this way.

Metaphysical poetry is concerned with abstract thought, imaginative conceits or philosophical subjects treated with levity and irony. Therefore, the metaphysical style of poetry is characterised by wit and intangible conceits. These poems often provide far-fetched or unusual similes or metaphors, which are then extended in an epigram format.

Donne published very little poetry in his lifetime, securing more fame as a preacher of sermons than a writer of verses. His earliest poems demonstrate an understanding of English society, which he often attacks with harsh criticism. It wasn't until two years after Donne's death in 1633, when this famous collection of his songs and sonnets was first published. Many of the poems are from his early days as a writer and the collection is particularly memorable for the erotic poems it contains. In these works Donne has been praised for his use of unconventional metaphors, with the most famous being employed to great comedic effect in *The Flea*. In the poem, as a flea bites two lovers one after another, the poet compares the act to sex, arguing that they may as well now regard themselves as physical lovers. However, these poems also contain some of the most beautiful poetry from the seventeenth century, with works such as *Break of Day* and

The Sun Rising, exemplifying Donne's ability to achieve a lyrical beauty and strong atmosphere of passionate love in his poetry.

Donne as a young man

CONTENTS

THE FLEA.
THE GOOD-MORROW.
GO AND CATCH A FALLING STAR.
WOMAN’S CONSTANCY.
THE UNDERTAKING.
THE SUN RISING.
THE INDIFFERENT.
LOVE’S USURY.
THE CANONIZATION.
THE TRIPLE FOOL.
LOVERS’ INFINITENESS.
SWEETEST LOVE, I DO NOT GO
THE LEGACY.
A FEVER.
AIR AND ANGELS.
BREAK OF DAY.
THE ANNIVERSARY.
TWICKENHAM GARDEN.
VALEDICTION TO HIS BOOK.
COMMUNITY.
LOVE’S GROWTH.
LOVE’S EXCHANGE.
CONFINED LOVE.
THE DREAM.
A VALEDICTION OF WEEPING.
LOVE’S ALCHEMY.
THE CURSE.
THE MESSAGE.
A NOCTURNAL UPON ST. LUCY’S DAY, BEING THE SHORTEST DAY.
WITCHCRAFT BY A PICTURE.
THE BAIT.
THE APPARITION.

THE BROKEN HEART.
A VALEDICTION FORBIDDING MOURNING.
THE ECSTACY.
LOVE’S DEITY.
LOVE’S DIET.
THE WILL.
THE FUNERAL.
THE BLOSSOM.
THE PRIMROSE
THE RELIC.
THE DAMP.
THE DISSOLUTION.
A JET RING SENT.
NEGATIVE LOVE.
THE PROHIBITION.
THE EXPIRATION.
THE COMPUTATION.
THE PARADOX.
SOUL’S JOY, NOW I AM GONE.
FAREWELL TO LOVE.
A LECTURE UPON THE SHADOW.
A DIALOGUE BETWEEN SIR HENRY WOTTON AND MR. DONNE.
THE TOKEN.
SELF-LOVE.

THE FLEA.

MARK but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest me is;
It suck’d me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be.
Thou know’st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead;
    Yet this enjoys before it woo,
    And pamper’d swells with one blood made of two;
    And this, alas! is more than we would do.

O stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, yea, more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is.
Though parents grudge, and you, we’re met,
And cloister’d in these living walls of jet.
    Though use make you apt to kill me,
    Let not to that self-murder added be,
    And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it suck’d from thee?
Yet thou triumph’st, and say’st that thou
Find’st not thyself nor me the weaker now.
‘Tis true; then learn how false fears be;
Just so much honour, when thou yield’st to me,
Will waste, as this flea’s death took life from thee.

THE GOOD-MORROW.

I WONDER by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we loved? were we not wean’d till then?
But suck’d on country pleasures, childishly?
Or snorted we in the Seven Sleepers’ den?
‘Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be;
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desired, and got, ‘twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone;
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown;
Let us possess one world; each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
Where can we find two better hemispheres
Without sharp north, without declining west?
Whatever dies, was not mix’d equally;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I
Love so alike that none can slacken, none can die.

GO AND CATCH A FALLING STAR.

GO and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,
Or who cleft the devil’s foot,
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy’s stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be’st born to strange sights,
Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights,
Till age snow white hairs on thee,
Thou, when thou return’st, wilt tell me,
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear,
No where
Lives a woman true and fair.

If thou find’st one, let me know,
Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
Yet do not, I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet,
Though she were true, when you met her,
And last, till you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be
False, ere I come, to two, or three.

WOMAN’S CONSTANCY.

NOW thou hast loved me one whole day,
To-morrow when thou leavest, what wilt thou say?
Wilt thou then antedate some new-made vow?
Or say that now
We are not just those persons which we were?
Or that oaths made in reverential fear
Of Love, and his wrath, any may forswear?
Or, as true deaths true marriages untie,
So lovers’ contracts, images of those,
Bind but till sleep, death’s image, them unloose?
Or, your own end to justify,
For having purposed change and falsehood, you
Can have no way but falsehood to be true?
Vain lunatic, against these ‘scapes I could
Dispute, and conquer, if I would;
Which I abstain to do,
For by to-morrow I may think so too.

THE UNDERTAKING.

I HAVE done one braver thing
    Than all the Worthies did;
And yet a braver thence doth spring,
    Which is, to keep that hid.

It were but madness now to impart
    The skill of specular stone,
When he, which can have learn’d the art
    To cut it, can find none.

So, if I now should utter this,
    Others — because no more
Such stuff to work upon, there is —
    Would love but as before.

But he who loveliness within
    Hath found, all outward loathes,
For he who color loves, and skin,
    Loves but their oldest clothes.

If, as I have, you also do
    Virtue in woman see,
And dare love that, and say so too,
    And forget the He and She;

And if this love, though placèd so,
    From profane men you hide,
Which will no faith on this bestow,
    Or, if they do, deride;

Then you have done a braver thing
    Than all the Worthies did;
And a braver thence will spring,
    Which is, to keep that hid.

THE SUN RISING.

BUSY old fool, unruly Sun,
Why dost thou thus,
Through windows, and through curtains, call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
Late school-boys and sour prentices,
Go tell court-huntsmen that the king will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices;
Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

Thy beams so reverend, and strong
Why shouldst thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long.
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and to-morrow late tell me,
Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, "All here in one bed lay."

She's all states, and all princes I;
Nothing else is;
Princes do but play us; compared to this,
All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
Thou, Sun, art half as happy as we,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere.

THE INDIFFERENT.

I CAN love both fair and brown;
Her whom abundance melts, and her whom want betrays;
Her who loves loneness best, and her who masks and plays;
Her whom the country form'd, and whom the town;
Her who believes, and her who tries;
Her who still weeps with spongy eyes,
And her who is dry cork, and never cries.
I can love her, and her, and you, and you;
I can love any, so she be not true.

Will no other vice content you?
Will it not serve your turn to do as did your mothers?
Or have you all old vices spent, and now would find out others?
Or doth a fear that men are true torment you?
O we are not, be not you so;
Let me — and do you — twenty know;
Rob me, but bind me not, and let me go.
Must I, who came to travel thorough you,
Grow your fix'd subject, because you are true?

Venus heard me sigh this song;
And by love's sweetest part, variety, she swore,
She heard not this till now; and that it should be so no more.
She went, examined, and return'd ere long,
And said, "Alas! some two or three
Poor heretics in love there be,
Which think to stablish dangerous constancy.
But I have told them, 'Since you will be true,
You shall be true to them who're false to you.' "

LOVE’S USURY.

FOR every hour that thou wilt spare me now,
I will allow,
Usurious god of love, twenty to thee,
When with my brown my gray hairs equal be.
Till then, Love, let my body range, and let
Me travel, sojourn, snatch, plot, have, forget,
Resume my last year’s relict; think that yet
We’d never met.

Let me think any rival’s letter mine,
And at next nine
Keep midnight’s promise; mistake by the way
The maid, and tell the lady of that delay;
Only let me love none; no, not the sport
From country grass to confitures of court,
Or city’s *quelque-choses*; let not report
My mind transport.

This bargain’s good; if when I’m old, I be
Inflamed by thee,
If thine own honour, or my shame and pain,
Thou covet most, at that age thou shalt gain.
Do thy will then; then subject and degree
And fruit of love, Love, I submit to thee.
Spare me till then; I’ll bear it, though she be
One that love me.

THE CANONIZATION.

FOR God’s sake hold your tongue, and let me love;
Or chide my palsy, or my gout;
My five gray hairs, or ruin’d fortune flout;
With wealth your state, your mind with arts improve;
Take you a course, get you a place,
Observe his Honour, or his Grace;
Or the king’s real, or his stamp’d face
Contemplate; what you will, approve,
So you will let me love.

Alas! alas! who’s injured by my love?
What merchant’s ships have my sighs drown’d?
Who says my tears have overflow’d his ground?
When did my colds a forward spring remove?
When did the heats which my veins fill
Add one more to the plaguy bill?
Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still
Litigious men, which quarrels move,
Though she and I do love.

Call’s what you will, we are made such by love;
Call her one, me another fly,
We’re tapers too, and at our own cost die,
And we in us find th’ eagle and the dove.
The phoenix riddle hath more wit
By us; we two being one, are it;
So, to one neutral thing both sexes fit.
We die and rise the same, and prove
Mysterious by this love.

We can die by it, if not live by love,
And if unfit for tomb or hearse
Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;
And if no piece of chronicle we prove,
We’ll build in sonnets pretty rooms;

As well a well-wrought urn becomes
The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs,
And by these hymns, all shall approve
Us canonized for love;

And thus invoke us, “You, whom reverend love
Made one another’s hermitage;
You, to whom love was peace, that now is rage;
Who did the whole world’s soul contract, and drove
Into the glasses of your eyes;
So made such mirrors, and such spies,
That they did all to you epitomize —
Countries, towns, courts beg from above
A pattern of your love.”

THE TRIPLE FOOL.

I am two fools, I know,
For loving, and for saying so
In whining poetry;
But where's that wise man, that would not be I,
If she would not deny?
Then as th' earth's inward narrow crooked lanes
Do purge sea water's fretful salt away,
I thought, if I could draw my pains
Through rhyme's vexation, I should them allay.
Grief brought to numbers cannot be so fierce,
For he tames it, that fetters it in verse.

But when I have done so,
Some man, his art and voice to show,
Doth set and sing my pain;
And, by delighting many, frees again
Grief, which verse did restrain.
To love and grief tribute of verse belongs,
But not of such as pleases when 'tis read.
Both are increasèd by such songs,
For both their triumphs so are published,
And I, which was two fools, do so grow three.
Who are a little wise, the best fools be.

LOVERS’ INFINITENESS.

IF yet I have not all thy love,
Dear, I shall never have it all;
I cannot breathe one other sigh, to move,
Nor can intreat one other tear to fall;
And all my treasure, which should purchase thee,
Sighs, tears, and oaths, and letters I have spent;
Yet no more can be due to me,
Than at the bargain made was meant.
If then thy gift of love were partial,
That some to me, some should to others fall,
    Dear, I shall never have thee all.

Or if then thou gavest me all,
All was but all, which thou hadst then;
But if in thy heart since there be or shall
New love created be by other men,
Which have their stocks entire, and can in tears,
In sighs, in oaths, and letters, outbid me,
This new love may beget new fears,
For this love was not vow’d by thee.
And yet it was, thy gift being general;
The ground, thy heart, is mine; what ever shall
    Grow there, dear, I should have it all.

Yet I would not have all yet.
He that hath all can have no more;
And since my love doth every day admit
New growth, thou shouldst have new rewards in store;
Thou canst not every day give me thy heart,
If thou canst give it, then thou never gavest it;
Love’s riddles are, that though thy heart depart,
It stays at home, and thou with losing savest it;
But we will have a way more liberal,

Than changing hearts, to join them; so we shall
Be one, and one another’s all.

SWEETEST LOVE, I DO NOT GO

SWEETEST love, I do not go,
For weariness of thee,
Nor in hope the world can show
A fitter love for me;
But since that I
At the last must part, ‘tis best,
Thus to use myself in jest
By feigned deaths to die.

Yesternight the sun went hence,
And yet is here to-day;
He hath no desire nor sense,
Nor half so short a way;
Then fear not me,
But believe that I shall make
Speedier journeys, since I take
More wings and spurs than he.

O how feeble is man’s power,
That if good fortune fall,
Cannot add another hour,
Nor a lost hour recall;
But come bad chance,
And we join to it our strength,
And we teach it art and length,
Itself o’er us to advance.

When thou sigh’st, thou sigh’st not wind,
But sigh’st my soul away;
When thou weep’st, unkindly kind,
My life’s blood doth decay.
It cannot be
That thou lovest me as thou say’st,
If in thine my life thou waste,
That art the best of me.

Let not thy divining heart
Forethink me any ill;
Destiny may take thy part,
And may thy fears fulfil.
But think that we
Are but turn’d aside to sleep.
They who one another keep
Alive, ne’er parted be.

THE LEGACY.

WHEN last I died, and, dear, I die
As often as from thee I go,
Though it be but an hour ago
— And lovers' hours be full eternity —
I can remember yet, that I
Something did say, and something did bestow;
Though I be dead, which sent me, I might be
Mine own executor, and legacy.

I heard me say, "Tell her anon,
That myself," that is you, not I,
" Did kill me," and when I felt me die,
I bid me send my heart, when I was gone;
But I alas! could there find none;
When I had ripp'd, and search'd where hearts should lie,
It kill'd me again, that I who still was true
In life, in my last will should cozen you.

Yet I found something like a heart,
But colours it, and corners had;
It was not good, it was not bad,
It was entire to none, and few had part;
As good as could be made by art
It seem'd, and therefore for our loss be sad.
I meant to send that heart instead of mine,
But O! no man could hold it, for 'twas thine.

A FEVER.

O! DO not die, for I shall hate
All women so, when thou art gone,
That thee I shall not celebrate,
When I remember thou wast one.

But yet thou canst not die, I know;
To leave this world behind, is death;
But when thou from this world wilt go,
The whole world vapours with thy breath.

Or if, when thou, the world's soul, go'st,
It stay, 'tis but thy carcase then;
The fairest woman, but thy ghost,
But corrupt worms, the worthiest men.

O wrangling schools, that search what fire
Shall burn this world, had none the wit
Unto this knowledge to aspire,
That this her feaver might be it?

And yet she cannot waste by this,
Nor long bear this torturing wrong,
For more corruption needful is,
To fuel such a fever long.

These burning fits but meteors be,
Whose matter in thee is soon spent;
Thy beauty, and all parts, which are thee,
Are unchangeable firmament.

Yet 'twas of my mind, seizing thee,
Though it in thee cannot perséver;
For I had rather owner be
Of thee one hour, than all else ever.

AIR AND ANGELS.

TWICE or thrice had I loved thee,
Before I knew thy face or name;
So in a voice, so in a shapeless flame
Angels affect us oft, and worshipp'd be.
Still when, to where thou wert, I came,
Some lovely glorious nothing did I see.
But since my soul, whose child love is,
Takes limbs of flesh, and else could nothing do,
More subtle than the parent is
Love must not be, but take a body too;
And therefore what thou wert, and who,
I bid Love ask, and now
That it assume thy body, I allow,
And fix itself in thy lip, eye, and brow.

Whilst thus to ballast love I thought,
And so more steadily to have gone,
With wares which would sink admiration,
I saw I had love's pinnace overfraught;
Thy every hair for love to work upon
Is much too much; some fitter must be sought;
For, nor in nothing, nor in things
Extreme, and scattering bright, can love inhere;
Then as an angel face and wings
Of air, not pure as it, yet pure doth wear,
So thy love may be my love's sphere;
Just such disparity
As is 'twixt air's and angels' purity,
'Twixt women's love, and men's, will ever be. BREAK OF DAY.

STAY, O sweet, and do not rise;
The light that shines comes from thine eyes;
The day breaks not, it is my heart,
Because that you and I must part.

Stay, or else my joys will die,
And perish in their infancy.

BREAK OF DAY.

‘TIS true, ‘tis day; what though it be?
O, wilt thou therefore rise from me?
Why should we rise because ‘tis light?
Did we lie down because ‘twas night?
Love, which in spite of darkness brought us hither,
Should in despite of light keep us together.

Light hath no tongue, but is all eye;
If it could speak as well as spy,
This were the worst that it could say,
That being well I fain would stay,
And that I loved my heart and honour so
That I would not from him, that had them, go.

Must business thee from hence remove?
O! that’s the worst disease of love,
The poor, the foul, the false, love can
Admit, but not the busied man.
He which hath business, and makes love, doth do
Such wrong, as when a married man doth woo.

THE ANNIVERSARY.

ALL kings, and all their favourites,
All glory of honours, beauties, wits,
The sun it self, which makes time, as they pass,
Is elder by a year now than it was
When thou and I first one another saw.
All other things to their destruction draw,
Only our love hath no decay;
This no to-morrow hath, nor yesterday;
Running it never runs from us away,
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.

Two graves must hide thine and my corse;
If one might, death were no divorce.
Alas! as well as other princes, we
— Who prince enough in one another be —
Must leave at last in death these eyes and ears,
Oft fed with true oaths, and with sweet salt tears;
But souls where nothing dwells but love
— All other thoughts being inmates — then shall prove
This or a love increasèd there above,
When bodies to their graves, souls from their graves remove.

And then we shall be throughly blest;
But now no more than all the rest.
Here upon earth we’re kings, and none but we
Can be such kings, nor of such subjects be.
Who is so safe as we? where none can do
Treason to us, except one of us two.
True and false fears let us refrain,
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, till we attain
To write threescore; this is the second of our reign.

A VALEDICTION OF MY NAME, IN THE WINDOW.

I.

MY name engraved herein
Doth contribute my firmness to this glass,
Which ever since that charm hath been
As hard, as that which graved it was;
Thine eye will give it price enough, to mock
The diamonds of either rock.

II.

‘Tis much that glass should be
As all-confessing, and through-shine as I;
‘Tis more that it shows thee to thee,
And clear reflects thee to thine eye.
But all such rules love’s magic can undo;
Here you see me, and I am you.

III.

As no one point, nor dash,
Which are but accessories to this name,
The showers and tempests can outwash
So shall all times find me the same;
You this entireness better may fulfill,
Who have the pattern with you still.

IV.

Or if too hard and deep
This learning be, for a scratch’d name to teach,
It as a given death’s head keep,
Lovers’ mortality to preach;
Or think this ragged bony name to be
My ruinous anatomy.

V.

Then, as all my souls be
Emparadised in you — in whom alone
I understand, and grow, and see —
The rafters of my body, bone,
Being still with you, the muscle, sinew, and vein
Which tile this house, will come again.

VI.

Till my return repair
And recompact my scatter’d body so,
As all the virtuous powers which are
Fix’d in the stars are said to flow
Into such characters as gravèd be
When these stars have supremacy.

VII.

So since this name was cut,
When love and grief their exaltation had,
No door ‘gainst this name’s influence shut.
As much more loving, as more sad,
‘Twill make thee; and thou shouldst, till I return,
Since I die daily, daily mourn.

VIII.

When thy inconsiderate hand
Flings open this casement, with my trembling name,
To look on one, whose wit or land
New battery to thy heart may frame,
Then think this name alive, and that thou thus
In it offend’st my Genius.

IX.

And when thy melted maid,
Corrupted by thy lover’s gold and page,

His letter at thy pillow hath laid,
Disputed it, and tamed thy rage,
And thou begin’st to thaw towards him, for this,
May my name step in, and hide his.

X.

And if this treason go
To an overt act and that thou write again,
In superscribing, this name flow
Into thy fancy from the pane;
So, in forgetting thou rememb’rest right,
And unaware to me shalt write.

XI.

But glass and lines must be
No means our firm substantial love to keep;
Near death inflicts this lethargy,
And this I murmur in my sleep;
Inpute this idle talk, to that I go,
For dying men talk often so.

TWICKENHAM GARDEN.

BLASTED with sighs, and surrounded with tears,
Hither I come to seek the spring,
And at mine eyes, and at mine ears,
Receive such balms as else cure every thing.
But O! self-traitor, I do bring
The spider Love, which transubstantiates all,
And can convert manna to gall;
And that this place may thoroughly be thought
True paradise, I have the serpent brought.

‘Twere wholesomer for me that winter did
Benight the glory of this place,
And that a grave frost did forbid
These trees to laugh and mock me to my face;
But that I may not this disgrace
Endure, nor yet leave loving, Love, let me
Some senseless piece of this place be;
Make me a mandrake, so I may grow here,
Or a stone fountain weeping out my year.

Hither with crystal phials, lovers, come,
And take my tears, which are love’s wine,
And try your mistress’ tears at home,
For all are false, that taste not just like mine.
Alas! hearts do not in eyes shine,
Nor can you more judge women’s thoughts by tears,
Than by her shadow what she wears.
O perverse sex, where none is true but she,
Who’s therefore true, because her truth kills me.

VALEDICTION TO HIS BOOK.

I’LL tell thee now (dear love) what thou shalt do
To anger destiny, as she doth us;
How I shall stay, though she eloign me thus,
And how posterity shall know it too;
How thine may out-endure
Sibyl’s glory, and obscure
Her who from Pindar could allure,
And her, through whose help Lucan is not lame,
And her, whose book (they say) Homer did find, and name.

Study our manuscripts, those myriads
Of letters, which have past ‘twixt thee and me;
Thence write our annals, and in them will be
To all whom love’s subliming fire invades,
Rule and example found;
There the faith of any ground
No schismatic will dare to wound,
That sees, how Love this grace to us affords,
To make, to keep, to use, to be these his records.

This book, as long-lived as the elements,
Or as the world’s form, this all-gravèd tome
In cypher writ, or new made idiom;
We for Love’s clergy only are instruments;
When this book is made thus,
Should again the ravenous
Vandals and Goths invade us,
Learning were safe; in this our universe,
Schools might learn sciences, spheres music, angels verse.

Here Love’s divines — since all divinity
Is love or wonder — may find all they seek,
Whether abstract spiritual love they like,
Their souls exhaled with what they do not see;
Or, loth so to amuse

Faith’s infirmity, they choose
Something which they may see and use;
For, though mind be the heaven, where love doth sit,
Beauty a convenient type may be to figure it.

Here more than in their books may lawyers find,
Both by what titles mistresses are ours,
And how prerogative these states devours,
Transferr’d from Love himself, to womankind;
Who, though from heart and eyes,
They exact great subsidies,
Forsake him who on them relies;
And for the cause, honour, or conscience give;
Chimeras vain as they or their prerogative.

Here statesmen — or of them, they which can read —
May of their occupation find the grounds;
Love, and their art, alike it deadly wounds,
If to consider what ‘tis, one proceed.
In both they do excel
Who the present govern well,
Whose weakness none doth, or dares tell;
In this thy book, such will there something see,
As in the Bible some can find out alchemy.

Thus vent thy thoughts; abroad I’ll study thee,
As he removes far off, that great heights takes;
How great love is, presence best trial makes,
But absence tries how long this love will be;
To take a latitude
Sun, or stars, are fitliest view’d
At their brightest, but to conclude
Of longitudes, what other way have we,
But to mark when and where the dark eclipses be?

COMMUNITY.

GOOD we must love, and must hate ill,
For ill is ill, and good good still;
    But there are things indifferent,
Which wee may neither hate, nor love,
But one, and then another prove,
    As we shall find our fancy bent.

If then at first wise Nature had
Made women either good or bad,
    Then some wee might hate, and some choose;
But since she did them so create,
That we may neither love, nor hate,
    Only this rests, all all may use.

If they were good it would be seen;
Good is as visible as green,
    And to all eyes itself betrays.
If they were bad, they could not last;
Bad doth itself, and others waste;
    So they deserve nor blame, nor praise.

But they are ours as fruits are ours;
He that but tastes, he that devours,
    And he that leaves all, doth as well;
Changed loves are but changed sorts of meat;
And when he hath the kernel eat,
    Who doth not fling away the shell?

LOVE’S GROWTH.

I SCARCE believe my love to be so pure
As I had thought it was,
Because it doth endure
Vicissitude, and season, as the grass;
Methinks I lied all winter, when I swore
My love was infinite, if spring make it more.

But if this medicine, love, which cures all sorrow
With more, not only be no quintessence,
But mix’d of all stuffs, vexing soul, or sense,
And of the sun his active vigour borrow,
Love’s not so pure, and abstract as they use
To say, which have no mistress but their Muse;
But as all else, being elemented too,
Love sometimes would contemplate, sometimes do.

And yet no greater, but more eminent,
Love by the spring is grown;
As in the firmament
Stars by the sun are not enlarged, but shown,
Gentle love deeds, as blossoms on a bough,
From love’s awakened root do bud out now.

If, as in water stirr’d more circles be
Produced by one, love such additions take,
Those like so many spheres but one heaven make,
For they are all concentric unto thee;
And though each spring do add to love new heat,
As princes do in times of action get
New taxes, and remit them not in peace,
No winter shall abate this spring’s increase.

LOVE'S EXCHANGE.

LOVE, any devil else but you
Would for a given soul give something too.
At court your fellows every day
Give th' art of rhyming, huntsmanship, or play,
For them which were their own before;
Only I have nothing, which gave more,
But am, alas! by being lowly, lower.

I ask no dispensation now,
To falsify a tear, or sigh, or vow;
I do not sue from thee to draw
A *non obstante* on nature's law;
These are prerogatives, they inhere
In thee and thine; none should forswear
Except that he Love's minion were.

Give me thy weakness, make me blind,
Both ways, as thou and thine, in eyes and mind;
Love, let me never know that this
Is love, or, that love childish is;
Let me not know that others know
That she knows my paines, lest that so
A tender shame make me mine own new woe.

If thou give nothing, yet thou 'rt just,
Because I would not thy first motions trust;
Small towns which stand stiff, till great shot
Enforce them, by war's law condition not;
Such in Love's warfare is my case;
I may not article for grace,
Having put Love at last to show this face.

This face, by which he could command
And change th' idolatry of any land,
This face, which, wheresoe'er it comes,

Can call vow’d men from cloisters, dead from tombs,
And melt both poles at once, and store
Deserts with cities, and make more
Mines in the earth, than quarries were before.

For this Love is enraged with me,
Yet kills not; if I must example be
To future rebels, if th’ unborn
Must learn by my being cut up and torn,
Kill, and dissect me, Love; for this
Torture against thine own end is;
Rack’d carcasses make ill anatomies.

CONFINED LOVE.

Some man unworthy to be possessor
Of old or new love, himself being false or weak,
Thought his pain and shame would be lesser,
If on womankind he might his anger wreak;
And thence a law did grow,
One might but one man know;
But are other creatures so?

Are sun, moon, or stars by law forbidden
To smile where they list, or lend away their light?
Are birds divorced or are they chidden
If they leave their mate, or lie abroad a night?
Beasts do no jointures lose
Though they new lovers choose;
But we are made worse than those.

Who e'er rigg'd fair ships to lie in harbours,
And not to seek lands, or not to deal with all?
Or built fair houses, set trees, and arbours,
Only to lock up, or else to let them fall?
Good is not good, unless
A thousand it possess,
But doth waste with greediness.

THE DREAM.

DEAR love, for nothing less than thee
Would I have broke this happy dream;
    It was a theme
For reason, much too strong for fantasy.
Therefore thou waked’st me wisely; yet
My dream thou brokest not, but continued’st it.
Thou art so true that thoughts of thee suffice
To make dreams truths, and fables histories;
Enter these arms, for since thou thought’st it best,
Not to dream all my dream, let’s act the rest.

As lightning, or a taper’s light,
Thine eyes, and not thy noise waked me;
    Yet I thought thee
— For thou lovest truth — an angel, at first sight;
But when I saw thou saw’st my heart,
And knew’st my thoughts beyond an angel’s art,
When thou knew’st what I dreamt, when thou knew’st when
Excess of joy would wake me, and camest then,
I must confess, it could not choose but be
Profane, to think thee any thing but thee.

Coming and staying show’d thee, thee,
But rising makes me doubt, that now
    Thou art not thou.
That love is weak where fear’s as strong as he;
‘Tis not all spirit, pure and brave,
If mixture it of fear, shame, honour have;
Perchance as torches, which must ready be,
Men light and put out, so thou deal’st with me;
Thou camest to kindle, go’st to come; then I
Will dream that hope again, but else would die.

A VALEDICTION OF WEEPING.

LET me pour forth
My tears before thy face, whilst I stay here,
For thy face coins them, and thy stamp they bear,
And by this mintage they are something worth.
For thus they be
Pregnant of thee;
Fruits of much grief they are, emblems of more;
When a tear falls, that thou fall’st which it bore;
So thou and I are nothing then, when on a divers shore.

On a round ball
A workman, that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,
And quickly make that, which was nothing, all.
So doth each tear,
Which thee doth wear,
A globe, yea world, by that impression grow,
Till thy tears mix’d with mine do overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolvèd so.

O! more than moon,
Draw not up seas to drown me in thy sphere;
Weep me not dead, in thine arms, but forbear
To teach the sea, what it may do too soon;
Let not the wind
Example find
To do me more harm than it purposeth:
Since thou and I sigh one another’s breath,
Whoe’er sighs most is cruellest, and hastes the other’s death.

LOVE’S ALCHEMY.

Some that have deeper digg’d love’s mine than I,
Say, where his centric happiness doth lie.
  I have loved, and got, and told,
But should I love, get, tell, till I were old,
I should not find that hidden mystery.
  O! ‘tis imposture all;
And as no chemic yet th’ elixir got,
  But glorifies his pregnant pot,
  If by the way to him befall
Some odoriferous thing, or medicinal,
   So, lovers dream a rich and long delight,
   But get a winter-seeming summer’s night.

Our ease, our thrift, our honour, and our day,
Shall we for this vain bubble’s shadow pay?
  Ends love in this, that my man
Can be as happy as I can, if he can
Endure the short scorn of a bridegroom’s play?
  That loving wretch that swears,
‘Tis not the bodies marry, but the minds,
  Which he in her angelic finds,
  Would swear as justly, that he hears,
In that day’s rude hoarse minstrelsy, the spheres.
   Hope not for mind in women; at their best,
   Sweetness and wit they are, but mummy, possess’d.

THE CURSE.

WHOEVER guesses, thinks, or dreams, he knows
Who is my mistress, wither by this curse;
Him, only for his purse
May some dull whore to love dispose,
And then yield unto all that are his foes;
May he be scorn'd by one, whom all else scorn,
Forswear to others, what to her he hath sworn,
With fear of missing, shame of getting, torn.

Madness his sorrow, gout his cramps, may he
Make, by but thinking who hath made him such;
And may he feel no touch
Of conscience, but of fame, and be
Anguish'd, not that 'twas sin, but that 'twas she;
Or may he for her virtue reverence
One that hates him only for impotence,
And equal traitors be she and his sense.

May he dream treason, and believe that he
Meant to perform it, and confesses, and die,
And no record tell why;
His sons, which none of his may be,
Inherit nothing but his infamy;
Or may he so long parasites have fed,
That he would fain be theirs whom he hath bred,
And at the last be circumcised for bread.

The venom of all stepdames, gamesters' gall,
What tyrants and their subjects interwish,
What plants, mine, beasts, fowl, fish,
Can contribute, all ill, which all
Prophets or poets spake, and all which shall
Be annex'd in schedules unto this by me,
Fall on that man; For if it be a she
Nature beforehand hath out-cursèd me.

THE MESSAGE.

SEND home my long stray’d eyes to me,
Which, O! too long have dwelt on thee;
Yet since there they have learn’d such ill,
  Such forced fashions,
  And false passions,
    That they be
    Made by thee
Fit for no good sight, keep them still.

Send home my harmless heart again,
Which no unworthy thought could stain;
Which if it be taught by thine
  To make jestings
  Of protestings,
    And break both
    Word and oath,
Keep it, for then ‘tis none of mine.

Yet send me back my heart and eyes,
That I may know, and see thy lies,
And may laugh and joy, when thou
  Art in anguish
  And dost languish
    For some one
    That will none,
Or prove as false as thou art now.

A NOCTURNAL UPON ST. LUCY'S DAY, BEING THE SHORTEST DAY.

'TIS the year's midnight, and it is the day's,
Lucy's, who scarce seven hours herself unmasks;
The sun is spent, and now his flasks
Send forth light squibs, no constant rays;
The world's whole sap is sunk;
The general balm th' hydroptic earth hath drunk,
Whither, as to the bed's-feet, life is shrunk,
Dead and interr'd; yet all these seem to laugh,
Compared with me, who am their epitaph.

Study me then, you who shall lovers be
At the next world, that is, at the next spring;
For I am every dead thing,
In whom Love wrought new alchemy.
For his art did express
A quintessence even from nothingness,
From dull privations, and lean emptiness;
He ruin'd me, and I am re-begot
Of absence, darkness, death — things which are not.

All others, from all things, draw all that's good,
Life, soul, form, spirit, whence they being have;
I, by Love's limbec, am the grave
Of all, that's nothing. Oft a flood
Have we two wept, and so
Drown'd the whole world, us two; oft did we grow,
To be two chaoses, when we did show
Care to aught else; and often absences
Withdrew our souls, and made us carcasses.

But I am by her death — which word wrongs her —
Of the first nothing the elixir grown;
Were I a man, that I were one

I needs must know; I should prefer,
If I were any beast,
Some ends, some means; yea plants, yea stones detest,
And love; all, all some properties invest.
If I an ordinary nothing were,
As shadow, a light, and body must be here.

But I am none; nor will my sun renew.
You lovers, for whose sake the lesser sun
At this time to the Goat is run
To fetch new lust, and give it you,
Enjoy your summer all,
Since she enjoys her long night’s festival.
Let me prepare towards her, and let me call
This hour her vigil, and her eve, since this
Both the year’s and the day’s deep midnight is.

WITCHCRAFT BY A PICTURE.

I FIX mine eye on thine, and there
Pity my picture burning in thine eye;
My picture drown’d in a transparent tear,
When I look lower I espy;
Hadst thou the wicked skill
By pictures made and marr’d, to kill,
How many ways mightst thou perform thy will?

But now I’ve drunk thy sweet salt tears,
And though thou pour more, I’ll depart;
My picture vanished, vanish all fears
That I can be endamaged by that art;
Though thou retain of me
One picture more, yet that will be,
Being in thine own heart, from all malice free.

THE BAIT.

COME live with me, and be my love,
And we will some new pleasures prove
Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,
With silken lines and silver hooks.

There will the river whisp'ring run
Warm'd by thy eyes, more than the sun;
And there th' enamour'd fish will stay,
Begging themselves they may betray.

When thou wilt swim in that live bath,
Each fish, which every channel hath,
Will amorously to thee swim,
Gladder to catch thee, than thou him.

If thou, to be so seen, be'st loth,
By sun or moon, thou dark'nest both,
And if myself have leave to see,
I need not their light, having thee.

Let others freeze with angling reeds,
And cut their legs with shells and weeds,
Or treacherously poor fish beset,
With strangling snare, or windowy net.

Let coarse bold hands from slimy nest
The bedded fish in banks out-wrest;
Or curious traitors, sleeve-silk flies,
Bewitch poor fishes' wand'ring eyes.

For thee, thou need'st no such deceit,
For thou thyself art thine own bait:
That fish, that is not catch'd thereby,
Alas! is wiser far than I.

THE APPARITION.

WHEN by thy scorn, O murd’ress, I am dead,
And that thou thinkst thee free
From all solicitation from me,
Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,
And thee, feign’d vestal, in worse arms shall see:
Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,
And he, whose thou art then, being tired before,
Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think
    Thou call’st for more,
And, in false sleep, will from thee shrink:
And then, poor aspen wretch, neglected thou
Bathed in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lie,
    A verier ghost than I.
What I will say, I will not tell thee now,
Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,
I’d rather thou shouldst painfully repent,
Than by my threatenings rest still innocent.

THE BROKEN HEART.

He is stark mad, whoever says,
That he hath been in love an hour,
Yet not that love so soon decays,
But that it can ten in less space devour;
Who will believe me, if I swear
That I have had the plague a year?
Who would not laugh at me, if I should say
I saw a flash of powder burn a day?

Ah, what a trifle is a heart,
If once into love's hands it come!
All other griefs allow a part
To other griefs, and ask themselves but some;
They come to us, but us love draws;
He swallows us and never chaws;
By him, as by chain'd shot, whole ranks do die;
He is the tyrant pike, our hearts the fry.

If 'twere not so, what did become
Of my heart when I first saw thee?
I brought a heart into the room,
But from the room I carried none with me.
If it had gone to thee, I know
Mine would have taught thine heart to show
More pity unto me; but Love, alas!
At one first blow did shiver it as glass.

Yet nothing can to nothing fall,
Nor any place be empty quite;
Therefore I think my breast hath all
Those pieces still, though they be not unite;
And now, as broken glasses show
A hundred lesser faces, so
My rags of heart can like, wish, and adore,
But after one such love, can love no more.

A VALEDICTION FORBIDDING MOURNING.

AS virtuous men pass mildly away,
And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say,
"Now his breath goes," and some say, "No."

So let us melt, and make no noise,
No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move;
'Twere profanation of our joys
To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harms and fears;
Men reckon what it did, and meant;
But trepidation of the spheres,
Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers' love
— Whose soul is sense — cannot admit
Of absence, 'cause it doth remove
The thing which elemented it.

But we by a love so much refined,
That ourselves know not what it is,
Inter-assurèd of the mind,
Care less, eyes, lips and hands to miss.

Our two souls therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to aery thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fix'd foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th' other do.

And though it in the centre sit,
Yet, when the other far doth roam,
It leans, and hearkens after it,
And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
Like th’ other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end where I begun.

THE ECSTACY.

WHERE, like a pillow on a bed,
A pregnant bank swell’d up, to rest
The violet’s reclining head,
Sat we two, one another’s best.

Our hands were firmly cemented
By a fast balm, which thence did spring;
Our eye-beams twisted, and did thread
Our eyes upon one double string.

So to engraft our hands, as yet
Was all the means to make us one;
And pictures in our eyes to get
Was all our propagation.

As, ‘twixt two equal armies, Fate
Suspends uncertain victory,
Our souls — which to advance their state,
Were gone out — hung ‘twixt her and me.

And whilst our souls negotiate there,
We like sepulchral statues lay;
All day, the same our postures were,
And we said nothing, all the day.

If any, so by love refined,
That he soul’s language understood,
And by good love were grown all mind,
Within convenient distance stood,

He — though he knew not which soul spake,
Because both meant, both spake the same —
Might thence a new concoction take,
And part far purer than he came.

This ecstasy doth unperplex
(We said) and tell us what we love;
We see by this, it was not sex;
We see, we saw not, what did move:

But as all several souls contain
Mixture of things they know not what,
Love these mix'd souls doth mix again,
And makes both one, each this, and that.

A single violet transplant,
The strength, the colour, and the size —
All which before was poor and scant —
Redoubles still, and multiplies.

When love with one another so
Interanimates two souls,
That abler soul, which thence doth flow,
Defects of loneliness controls.

We then, who are this new soul, know,
Of what we are composed, and made,
For th' atomies of which we grow
Are souls, whom no change can invade.

But, O alas! so long, so far,
Our bodies why do we forbear?
They are ours, though not we; we are
Th' intelligences, they the spheres.

We owe them thanks, because they thus
Did us, to us, at first convey,
Yielded their senses' force to us,
Nor are dross to us, but allay.

On man heaven's influence works not so,
But that it first imprints the air;

For soul into the soul may flow,
    Though it to body first repair.

As our blood labours to beget
    Spirits, as like souls as it can;
Because such fingers need to knit
    That subtle knot, which makes us man;

So must pure lovers' souls descend
    To affections, and to faculties,
Which sense may reach and apprehend,
    Else a great prince in prison lies.

To our bodies turn we then, that so
    Weak men on love reveal'd may look;
Love's mysteries in souls do grow,
    But yet the body is his book.

And if some lover, such as we,
    Have heard this dialogue of one,
Let him still mark us, he shall see
    Small change when we're to bodies gone.

LOVE’S DEITY.

I LONG to talk with some old lover’s ghost,
Who died before the god of love was born.
I cannot think that he, who then loved most,
Sunk so low as to love one which did scorn.
But since this god produced a destiny,
And that vice-nature, custom, lets it be,
I must love her that loves not me.

Sure, they which made him god, meant not so much,
Nor he in his young godhead practised it.
But when an even flame two hearts did touch,
His office was indulgently to fit
Actives to passives. Correspondency
Only his subject was; it cannot be
Love, till I love her, who loves me.

But every modern god will now extend
His vast prerogative as far as Jove.
To rage, to lust, to write to, to commend,
All is the purlieu of the god of love.
O! were we waken’d by this tyranny
To ungod this child again, it could not be
I should love her, who loves not me.

Rebel and atheist too, why murmur I,
As though I felt the worst that love could do?
Love might make me leave loving, or might try
A deeper plague, to make her love me too;
Which, since she loves before, I’m loth to see.
Falsehood is worse than hate; and that must be,
If she whom I love, should love me.

LOVE’S DIET.

TO what a cumbersome unwieldiness
And burdenous corpulence my love had grown,
    But that I did, to make it less,
    And keep it in proportion,
Give it a diet, made it feed upon
That which love worst endures, discretion

Above one sigh a day I allow’d him not,
Of which my fortune, and my faults had part;
    And if sometimes by stealth he got
    A she sigh from my mistress’ heart,
And thought to feast upon that, I let him see
‘Twas neither very sound, nor meant to me.

If he wrung from me a tear, I brined it so
With scorn and shame, that him it nourish’d not;
    If he suck’d hers, I let him know
    ‘Twas not a tear which he had got;
His drink was counterfeit, as was his meat;
For eyes, which roll towards all, weep not, but sweat.

Whatever he would dictate I writ that,
But burnt her letters when she writ to me;
    And if that favour made him fat,
    I said, “If any title be
Convey’d by this, ah! what doth it avail,
To be the fortieth name in an entail?”

Thus I reclaim’d my buzzard love, to fly
At what, and when, and how, and where I choose.
    Now negligent of sports I lie,
    And now, as other falconers use,
I spring a mistress, swear, write, sigh, and weep;
And the game kill’d, or lost, go talk or sleep.

THE WILL.

BEFORE I sigh my last gasp, let me breathe,
Great Love, some legacies; I here bequeath
Mine eyes to Argus, if mine eyes can see;
If they be blind, then, Love, I give them thee;
My tongue to Fame; to ambassadors mine ears;
To women, or the sea, my tears;
Thou, Love, hast taught me heretofore
By making me serve her who had twenty more,
That I should give to none, but such as had too much before.

My constancy I to the planets give;
My truth to them who at the court do live;
My ingenuity and openness,
To Jesuits; to buffoons my pensiveness;
My silence to any, who abroad hath been;
My money to a Capuchin:
Thou, Love, taught'st me, by appointing me
To love there, where no love received can be,
Only to give to such as have an incapacity.

My faith I give to Roman Catholics;
All my good works unto the Schismatics
Of Amsterdam; my best civility
And courtship to an University;
My modesty I give to soldiers bare;
My patience let gamesters share:
Thou, Love, taught'st me, by making me
Love her that holds my love disparity,
Only to give to those that count my gifts indignity.

I give my reputation to those
Which were my friends; mine industry to foes;
To schoolmen I bequeath my doubtfulness;
My sickness to physicians, or excess;
To nature all that I in rhyme have writ;

And to my company my wit:
Thou, Love, by making me adore
Her, who begot this love in me before,
Taught’st me to make, as though I gave, when I do but restore.

To him for whom the passing-bell next tolls,
I give my physic books; my written rolls
Of moral counsels I to Bedlam give;
My brazen medals unto them which live
In want of bread; to them which pass among
All foreigners, mine English tongue:
Though, Love, by making me love one
Who thinks her friendship a fit portion
For younger lovers, dost my gifts thus disproportion.

Therefore I’ll give no more, but I’ll undo
The world by dying, because love dies too.
Then all your beauties will be no more worth
Than gold in mines, where none doth draw it forth;
And all your graces no more use shall have,
Than a sun-dial in a grave:
Thou, Love, taught’st me by making me
Love her who doth neglect both me and thee,
To invent, and practise this one way, to annihilate all three.

THE FUNERAL.

WHOEVER comes to shroud me, do not harm,
Nor question much,
That subtle wreath of hair, which crowns my arm;
The mystery, the sign, you must not touch;
For ‘tis my outward soul,
Viceroy to that, which then to heaven being gone,
Will leave this to control
And keep these limbs, her provinces, from dissolution.

For if the sinewy thread my brain lets fall
Through every part
Can tie those parts, and make me one of all,
Those hairs which upward grew, and strength and art
Have from a better brain,
Can better do ‘t; except she meant that I
By this should know my pain,
As prisoners then are manacled, when they’re condemn’d to die.

Whate’er she meant by it, bury it with me,
For since I am
Love’s martyr, it might breed idolatry,
If into other hands these relics came.
As ‘twas humility
To afford to it all that a soul can do,
So ‘tis some bravery,
That since you would have none of me, I bury some of you.

THE BLOSSOM.

LITTLE think’st thou, poor flower,
Whom I’ve watch’d six or seven days,
And seen thy birth, and seen what every hour
Gave to thy growth, thee to this height to raise,
And now dost laugh and triumph on this bough,
Little think’st thou,
That it will freeze anon, and that I shall
To-morrow find thee fallen, or not at all.

Little think’st thou, poor heart,
That labourest yet to nestle thee,
And think’st by hovering here to get a part
In a forbidden or forbidding tree,
And hopest her stiffness by long siege to bow,
Little think’st thou
That thou to-morrow, ere the sun doth wake,
Must with the sun and me a journey take.

But thou, which lovest to be
Subtle to plague thyself, wilt say,
Alas! if you must go, what’s that to me?
Here lies my business, and here I will stay
You go to friends, whose love and means present
Various content
To your eyes, ears, and taste, and every part;
If then your body go, what need your heart?

Well then, stay here; but know,
When thou hast stay’d and done thy most,
A naked thinking heart, that makes no show,
Is to a woman but a kind of ghost.
How shall she know my heart; or having none,
Know thee for one?
Practice may make her know some other part;
But take my word, she doth not know a heart.

Meet me in London, then,
Twenty days hence, and thou shalt see
Me fresher and more fat, by being with men,
Than if I had stay’d still with her and thee.
For God’s sake, if you can, be you so too;
I will give you
There to another friend, whom we shall find
As glad to have my body as my mind.

THE PRIMROSE

BEING AT MONTGOMERY CASTLE UPON THE HILL, ON WHICH IT IS SITUATE.

UPON this Primrose hill,
Where, if heaven would distil
A shower of rain, each several drop might go
To his own primrose, and grow manna so;
And where their form, and their infinity
Make a terrestrial galaxy,
As the small stars do in the sky;
I walk to find a true love; and I see
That ‘tis not a mere woman, that is she,
But must or more or less than woman be.

Yet know I not, which flower
I wish; a six, or four;
For should my true-love less than woman be,
She were scarce anything; and then, should she
Be more than woman, she would get above
All thought of sex, and think to move
My heart to study her, and not to love.
Both these were monsters; since there must reside
Falsehood in woman, I could more abide,
She were by art, than nature falsified.

Live, primrose, then, and thrive
With thy true number five;
And, woman, whom this flower doth represent,
With this mysterious number be content;
Ten is the farthest number; if half ten
Belongs to each woman, then
Each woman may take half us men;
Or — if this will not serve their turn — since all
Numbers are odd, or even, and they fall
First into five, women may take us all.

THE RELIC.

WHEN my grave is broke up again
Some second guest to entertain,
— For graves have learn’d that woman-head,
To be to more than one a bed —
And he that digs it, spies
A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,
Will he not let us alone,
And think that there a loving couple lies,
Who thought that this device might be some way
To make their souls at the last busy day
Meet at this grave, and make a little stay?

If this fall in a time, or land,
Where mass-devotion doth command,
Then he that digs us up will bring
Us to the bishop or the king,
To make us relics; then
Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I
A something else thereby;
All women shall adore us, and some men.
And, since at such time miracles are sought,
I would have that age by this paper taught
What miracles we harmless lovers wrought.

First we loved well and faithfully,
Yet knew not what we loved, nor why;
Difference of sex we never knew,
No more than guardian angels do;
Coming and going we
Perchance might kiss, but not between those meals;
Our hands ne’er touch’d the seals,
Which nature, injured by late law, sets free.
These miracles we did; but now alas!

All measure, and all language, I should pass,
Should I tell what a miracle she was.

THE DAMP.

WHEN I am dead, and doctors know not why,
And my friends' curiosity
Will have me cut up to survey each part,
When they shall find your picture in my heart,
You think a sudden damp of love
Will thorough all their senses move,
And work on them as me, and so prefer
Your murder to the name of massacre,

Poor victories; but if you dare be brave,
And pleasure in your conquest have,
First kill th' enormous giant, your Disdain;
And let th' enchantress Honour, next be slain;
And like a Goth and Vandal rise,
Deface records and histories
Of your own arts and triumphs over men,
And without such advantage kill me then,

For I could muster up, as well as you,
My giants, and my witches too,
Which are vast Constancy and Secretness;
But these I neither look for nor profess;
Kill me as woman, let me die
As a mere man; do you but try
Your passive valour, and you shall find then,
Naked you have odds enough of any man.

THE DISSOLUTION.

SHE’s dead; and all which die
To their first elements resolve;
And we were mutual elements to us,
And made of one another.
My body then doth hers involve,
And those things whereof I consist hereby
In me abundant grow, and burdenous,
And nourish not, but smother.
My fire of passion, sighs of air,
Water of tears, and earthly sad despair,
Which my materials be,
But near worn out by love’s security,
She, to my loss, doth by her death repair.
And I might live long wretched so,
But that my fire doth with my fuel grow.
Now, as those active kings
Whose foreign conquest treasure brings,
Receive more, and spend more, and soonest break,
This — which I am amazed that I can speak —
This death, hath with my store
My use increased.
And so my soul, more earnestly released,
Will outstrip hers; as bullets flown before
A latter bullet may o’ertake, the powder being more.

A JET RING SENT.

THOU art not so black as my heart,
Nor half so brittle as her heart, thou art;
What would’st thou say? shall both our properties by thee be spoke,
— Nothing more endless, nothing sooner broke?

Marriage rings are not of this stuff;
Oh, why should ought less precious, or less tough
Figure our loves? except in thy name thou have bid it say,
“ — I’m cheap, and nought but fashion; fling me away.”

Yet stay with me since thou art come,
Circle this finger’s top, which didst her thumb;
Be justly proud, and gladly safe, that thou dost dwell with me;
She that, O! broke her faith, would soon break thee.

NEGATIVE LOVE.

I NEVER stoop’d so low, as they
Which on an eye, cheek, lip, can prey;
    Seldom to them which soar no higher
    Than virtue, or the mind to admire.
For sense and understanding may
    Know what gives fuel to their fire;
My love, though silly, is more brave;
For may I miss, whene’er I crave,
If I know yet what I would have.

If that be simply perfectest,
Which can by no way be express’d
    But negatives, my love is so.
    To all, which all love, I say no.
If any who deciphers best,
    What we know not — ourselves — can know,
Let him teach me that nothing. This
As yet my ease and comfort is,
Though I speed not, I cannot miss.

THE PROHIBITION.

TAKE heed of loving me;
At least remember, I forbade it thee;
Not that I shall repair my unthrifty waste
Of breath and blood, upon thy sighs and tears,
By being to thee then what to me thou wast;
But so great joy our life at once outwears.
Then, lest thy love by my death frustrate be,
If thou love me, take heed of loving me.

Take heed of hating me,
Or too much triumph in the victory;
Not that I shall be mine own officer,
And hate with hate again retaliate;
But thou wilt lose the style of conqueror,
If I, thy conquest, perish by thy hate.
Then, lest my being nothing lessen thee,
If thou hate me, take heed of hating me.

Yet love and hate me too;
So these extremes shall ne’er their office do;
Love me, that I may die the gentler way;
Hate me, because thy love’s too great for me;
Or let these two, themselves, not me, decay;
So shall I live thy stage, not triumph be.
Lest thou thy love and hate, and me undo,
O let me live, yet love and hate me too.

THE EXPIRATION.

SO, so, break off this last lamenting kiss,
Which sucks two souls, and vapours both away;
Turn, thou ghost, that way, and let me turn this,
And let ourselves benight our happiest day.
We ask none leave to love; nor will we owe
Any so cheap a death as saying, “Go.”

Go; and if that word have not quite killed thee,
Ease me with death, by bidding me go too.
Or, if it have, let my word work on me,
And a just office on a murderer do.
Except it be too late, to kill me so,
Being double dead, going, and bidding, “Go.”

THE COMPUTATION.

FOR my first twenty years, since yesterday,
I scarce believed thou couldst be gone away;
For forty more I fed on favours past,
And forty on hopes that thou wouldst they might last;
Tears drown’d one hundred, and sighs blew out two;
A thousand, I did neither think nor do,
Or not divide, all being one thought of you;
Or in a thousand more, forgot that too.
Yet call not this long life; but think that I
Am, by being dead, immortal; can ghosts die?

THE PARADOX.

NO lover saith, I love, nor any other
Can judge a perfect lover;
He thinks that else none can or will agree,
That any loves but he;
I cannot say I loved, for who can say
He was kill’d yesterday.
Love with excess of heat, more young than old,
Death kills with too much cold;
We die but once, and who loved last did die,
He that saith, twice, doth lie;
For though he seem to move, and stir a while,
It doth the sense beguile.
Such life is like the light which bideth yet
When the life’s light is set,
Or like the heat which fire in solid matter
Leaves behind, two hours after.
Once I loved and died; and am now become
Mine epitaph and tomb;
Here dead men speak their last, and so do I;
Love-slain, lo! here I die.

SOUL’S JOY, NOW I AM GONE.

SOUL’S joy, now I am gone,
And you alone,
— Which cannot be,
Since I must leave myself with thee,
And carry thee with me —
Yet when unto our eyes
Absence denies
Each other’s sight,
And makes to us a constant night,
When others change to light;
O give no way to grief,
But let belief
Of mutual love
This wonder to the vulgar prove,
Our bodies, not we move.

Let not thy wit beweep
Words but sense deep;
For when we miss
By distance our hope’s joining bliss,
Even then our souls shall kiss;
Fools have no means to meet,
But by their feet;
Why should our clay
Over our spirits so much sway,
To tie us to that way?
O give no way to grief, &c.

FAREWELL TO LOVE.

WHILST yet to prove
I thought there was some deity in love,
So did I reverence, and gave
Worship; as atheists at their dying hour
Call, what they cannot name, an unknown power,
As ignorantly did I crave.
Thus when
Things not yet known are coveted by men,
Our desires give them fashion, and so
As they wax lesser, fall, as they size, grow.

But, from late fair,
His highness sitting in a golden chair,
Is not less cared for after three days
By children, than the thing which lovers so
Blindly admire, and with such worship woo;
Being had, enjoying it decays;
And thence,
What before pleased them all, takes but one sense,
And that so lamely, as it leaves behind
A kind of sorrowing dulness to the mind.

Ah cannot we,
As well as cocks and lions, jocund be
After such pleasures, unless wise
Nature decreed — since each such act, they say,
Diminisheth the length of life a day —
This; as she would man should despise
The sport,
Because that other curse of being short,
And only for a minute made to be
Eager, desires to raise posterity.

Since so, my mind
Shall not desire what no man else can find;

I’ll no more dote and run
To pursue things which had endamaged me;
And when I come where moving beauties be,
As men do when the summer’s sun
Grows great,
Though I admire their greatness, shun their heat.
Each place can afford shadows; if all fail,
‘Tis but applying worm-seed to the tail.

A LECTURE UPON THE SHADOW.

STAND still, and I will read to thee
A lecture, Love, in Love’s philosophy.
    These three hours that we have spent,
    Walking here, two shadows went
Along with us, which we ourselves produced.
But, now the sun is just above our head,
    We do those shadows tread,
    And to brave clearness all things are reduced.
So whilst our infant loves did grow,
Disguises did, and shadows, flow
From us and our cares; but now ‘tis not so.

That love hath not attain’d the highest degree,
Which is still diligent lest others see.

Except our loves at this noon stay,
We shall new shadows make the other way.
    As the first were made to blind
    Others, these which come behind
Will work upon ourselves, and blind our eyes.
If our loves faint, and westerwardly decline,
    To me thou, falsely, thine
    And I to thee mine actions shall disguise.
The morning shadows wear away,
But these grow longer all the day;
But O! love’s day is short, if love decay.

Love is a growing, or full constant light,
And his short minute, after noon, is night.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN SIR HENRY WOTTON AND MR. DONNE.

[W.]

IF her disdain least change in you can move,
  You do not love,
For when that hope gives fuel to the fire,
  You sell desire.
 Love is not love, but given free;
 And so is mine; so should yours be.

[D.]

Her heart, that weeps to hear of others' moan,
  To mine is stone.
Her eyes, that weep a stranger's eyes to see,
  Joy to wound me.
 Yet I so well affect each part,
 As — caused by them — I love my smart.

[W.]

Say her disdainings justly must be graced
  With name of chaste;
And that she frowns lest longing should exceed,
  And raging breed;
 So her disdains can ne'er offend,
 Unless self-love take private end.

[D.]

'Tis love breeds love in me, and cold disdain
  Kills that again,
As water causeth fire to fret and fume,
  Till all consume.

Who can of love more rich gift make,
That to Love’s self for love’s own sake?

I’ll never dig in quarry of an heart
To have no part,
Nor roast in fiery eyes, which always are
Canicular.
Who this way would a lover prove,
May show his patience, not his love.

A frown may be sometimes for physic good,
But not for food;
And for that raging humour there is sure
A gentler cure.
Why bar you love of private end,
Which never should to public tend?

THE TOKEN.

SEND me some tokens, that my hope may live
Or that my easeless thoughts may sleep and rest;
Send me some honey, to make sweet my hive,
That in my passions I may hope the best.
I beg nor ribbon wrought with thine own hands,
To knit our loves in the fantastic strain
Of new-touch’d youth; nor ring to show the stands
Of our affection, that, as that’s round and plain,
So should our loves meet in simplicity;
No, nor the corals, which thy wrist enfold,
Laced up together in congruity,
To show our thoughts should rest in the same hold;
No, nor thy picture, though most gracious,
And most desired, ‘cause ‘tis like the best
Nor witty lines, which are most copious,
Within the writings which thou hast address’d.
Send me nor this nor that, to increase my score,
But swear thou think’st I love thee, and no more.

SELF-LOVE.

HE that cannot choose but love,
And strives against it still,
Never shall my fancy move,
For he loves against his will;
Nor he which is all his own,
And cannot pleasure choose;
When I am caught he can be gone,
And when he list refuse;
Nor he that loves none but fair,
For such by all are sought;
Nor he that can for foul ones care,
For his judgement then is nought;
Nor he that hath wit, for he
Will make me his jest or slave;
Nor a fool when others —
He can neither —
Nor he that still his mistress prays,
For she is thrall’d therefore;
Nor he that pays, not, for he says
Within, she’s worth no more.
Is there then no kind of men
Whom I may freely prove?
I will vent that humour then
In mine own self-love.

ELEGIES

These poems were written at various times during the poet's younger years, but they were not published until some time after Donne's death. Like the songs and sonnets, the elegies reveal Donne's imaginative and witty genius, as well as his bawdy humour. For example, in the famous elegy *To His Mistress Going to Bed*, Donne poetically undresses his mistress, likening the act to the exploration of America. In Elegy XVIII, he compares the gap between his lover's breasts to traversing the Hellespont and there are many other examples of imaginative and humorous jests. Although these poems were never published in the poet's lifetime, Donne did allow them to circulate widely in manuscript form.

A 1595 portrait of Donne as a young man, by an unknown artist, now housed in the National Portrait Gallery, London

CONTENTS

JEALOUSY.
THE ANAGRAM.
CHANGE.
THE PERFUME.
HIS PICTURE.
O, LET ME NOT SERVE SO, AS THOSE MEN SERVE
NATURE’S LAY IDIOT, I TAUGHT THEE TO LOVE
THE COMPARISON.
THE AUTUMNAL.
THE DREAM.
THE BRACELET.
COME FATES; I FEAR YOU NOT!
HIS PARTING FROM HER.
JULIA.
A TALE OF A CITIZEN AND HIS WIFE.
THE EXPOSTULATION.
ON HIS MISTRESS.
VARIETY
LOVES PROGRESS
TO HIS MISTRESS GOING TO BED.
LOVE’S WAR

ELEGY I.

JEALOUSY.

FOND woman, which wouldst have thy husband die,
And yet complain’st of his great jealousy;
If, swollen with poison, he lay in his last bed,
His body with a sere bark covered,
Drawing his breath as thick and short as can
The nimblest crocheting musician,
Ready with loathsome vomiting to spew
His soul out of one hell into a new,
Made deaf with his poor kindred’s howling cries,
Begging with few feign’d tears great legacies, —
Thou wouldst not weep, but jolly, and frolic be,
As a slave, which to-morrow should be free.
Yet weep’st thou, when thou seest him hungerly
Swallow his own death, heart’s-bane jealousy?
O give him many thanks, he’s courteous,
That in suspecting kindly warneth us.
We must not, as we used, flout openly,
In scoffing riddles, his deformity;
Nor at his board together being sat,
With words, nor touch, scarce looks, adulterate.
Nor when he, swollen and pamper’d with great fare,
Sits down and snorts, caged in his basket chair,
Must we usurp his own bed any more,
Nor kiss and play in his house, as before.
Now I see many dangers; for it is
His realm, his castle, and his diocese.
But if — as envious men, which would revile
Their prince, or coin his gold, themselves exile
Into another country, and do it there —
We play in another house, what should we fear?
There we will scorn his household policies,
His silly plots, and pensionary spies,

As the inhabitants of Thames' right side
Do London's mayor, or Germans the Pope's pride.

ELEGY II.

THE ANAGRAM.

MARRY, and love thy Flavia, for she
Hath all things, whereby others beauteous be;
For, though her eyes be small, her mouth is great;
Though they be ivory, yet her teeth be jet;
Though they be dim, yet she is light enough;
And though her harsh hair fall, her skin is tough;
What though her cheeks be yellow, her hair's red,
Give her thine, and she hath a maidenhead.
These things are beauty's elements; where these
Meet in one, that one must, as perfect, please.
If red and white, and each good quality
Be in thy wench, ne'er ask where it doth lie.
In buying things perfumed, we ask, if there
Be musk and amber in it, but not where.
Though all her parts be not in th' usual place,
She hath yet an anagram of a good face.
If we might put the letters but one way,
In that lean dearth of words, what could we say?
When by the gamut some musicians make
A perfect song, others will undertake,
By the same gamut changed, to equal it.
Things simply good can never be unfit;
She's fair as any, if all be like her;
And if none be, then she is singular.
All love is wonder; if we justly do
Account her wonderful, why not lovely too?
Love built on beauty, soon as beauty, dies;
Choose this face, changed by no deformities.
Women are all like angels; the fair be
Like those which fell to worse; but such as she,
Like to good angels, nothing can impair:
'Tis less grief to be foul, than to have been fair.

For one night’s revels, silk and gold we choose,
But, in long journeys, cloth and leather use.
Beauty is barren oft; best husbands say,
There is best land, where there is foulest way.
Oh, what a sovereign plaster will she be,
If thy past sins have taught thee jealousy!
Here needs no spies, nor eunuchs; her commit
Safe to thy foes, yea, to a marmoset.
When Belgia’s cities the round country drowns,
That dirty foulness guards and arms the towns,
So doth her face guard her; and so, for thee,
Which forced by business, absent oft must be,
She, whose face, like clouds, turns the day to night;
Who, mightier than the sea, makes Moors seem white;
Who, though seven years she in the stews had laid,
A nunnery durst receive, and think a maid;
And though in childbed’s labour she did lie,
Midwives would swear ‘twere but a tympany;
Whom, if she accuse herself, I credit less
Than witches, which impossibles confess;
One like none, and liked of none, fittest were;
For things in fashion every man will wear.

ELEGY III.

CHANGE.

ALTHOUGH thy hand and faith, and good works too,
Have sealed thy love which nothing should undo,
Yea, though thou fall back, that apostasy
Confirm thy love, yet much, much I fear thee.
Women are like the arts, forced unto none,
Open to all searchers, unprized, if unknown.
If I have caught a bird, and let him fly,
Another fowler using these means, as I,
May catch the same bird; and, as these things be,
Women are made for men, not him nor me.
Foxes, and goats — all beasts — change when they please.
Shall women, more hot, wily, wild than these,
Be bound to one man, and did nature then
Idly make them apter to endure than men?
They're our clogs, not their own; if a man be
Chain'd to a galley, yet the galley's free.
Who hath a plough-land, casts all his seed corn there,
And yet allows his ground more corn should bear;
Though Danuby into the sea must flow,
The sea receives the Rhine, Volga, and Po.
By nature, which gave it, this liberty
Thou lovest, but O! canst thou love it and me?
Likeness glues love; and if that thou so do,
To make us like and love, must I change too?
More than thy hate, I hate it; rather let me
Allow her change, then change as oft as she,
And so not teach, but force my opinion,
To love not any one, nor every one.
To live in one land is captivity,
To run all countries a wild roguery.
Waters stink soon, if in one place they bide,
And in the vast sea are more putrified;

But when they kiss one bank, and leaving this
Never look back, but the next bank do kiss,
Then are they purest; change is the nursery
Of music, joy, life and eternity.

ELEGY IV.

THE PERFUME.

ONCE, and but once, found in thy company,
All thy supposed escapes are laid on me;
And as a thief at bar is question'd there
By all the men that have been robb'd that year,
So am I — by this traiterous means surprized —
By thy hydroptic father catechized.
Though he had wont to search with glazèd eyes,
As though he came to kill a cockatrice;
Though he hath oft sworn that he would remove
Thy beauty's beauty, and food of our love,
Hope of his goods, if I with thee were seen,
Yet close and secret, as our souls, we've been.
Though thy immortal mother, which doth lie
Still buried in her bed, yet will not die,
Takes this advantage to sleep out daylight,
And watch thy entries and returns all night;
And, when she takes thy hand, and would seem kind,
Doth search what rings and armlets she can find;
And kissing notes the colour of thy face;
And fearing lest thou'rt swollen, doth thee embrace;
To try if thou long, doth name strange meats;
And notes thy paleness, blushing, sighs, and sweats;
And politicly will to thee confess
The sins of her own youth's rank lustiness;
Yet love these sorceries did remove, and move
Thee to gull thine own mother for my love.
Thy little brethren, which like fairy sprites
Oft skipp'd into our chamber, those sweet nights,
And kiss'd, and ingled on thy father's knee,
Were bribed next day to tell what they did see;
The grim-eight-foot-high-iron-bound serving-man,
That oft names God in oaths, and only then,

He that, to bar the first gate, doth as wide
As the great Rhodian Colossus stride
— Which, if in hell no other pains there were,
Makes me fear hell, because he must be there —
Though by thy father he were hired to this,
Could never witness any touch or kiss.
But O! too common ill, I brought with me
That, which betray'd me to mine enemy,
A loud perfume, which at my entrance cried
Even at thy father's nose; so were we spied.
When, like a tyrant King, that in his bed
Smelt gunpowder, the pale wretch shivered,
Had it been some bad smell, he would have thought
That his own feet, or breath, that smell had wrought;
But as we in our isle imprisoned,
Where cattle only and diverse dogs are bred,
The precious unicorns strange monsters call,
So thought he good strange, that had none at all.
I taught my silks their whistling to forbear;
Even my oppress'd shoes dumb and speechless were;
Only thou bitter sweet, whom I had laid
Next me, me traiterously hast betray'd,
And unsuspected hast invisibly
At once fled unto him, and stay'd with me.
Base excrement of earth, which dost confound
Sense from distinguishing the sick from sound!
By thee the silly amorous sucks his death
By drawing in a leprous harlot's breath;
By thee the greatest stain to man's estate
Falls on us, to be call'd effeminate;
Though you be much loved in the prince's hall,
There things that seem exceed substantial;
Gods, when ye fumed on altars, were pleased well,
Because you were burnt, not that they liked your smell;
You're loathsome all, being taken simply alone;
Shall we love ill things join'd, and hate each one?
If you were good, your good doth soon decay;

And you are rare; that takes the good away:
All my perfumes I give most willingly
To embalm thy father’s corpse; what? will he die?

ELEGY V.

HIS PICTURE.

HERE take my picture; though I bid farewell,
Thine, in my heart, where my soul dwells, shall dwell.
‘Tis like me now, but I dead, ‘twill be more,
When we are shadows both, than ‘twas before.
When weatherbeaten I come back; my hand
Perhaps with rude oars torn, or sun-beams tann’d,
My face and breast of haircloth, and my head
With care’s harsh sudden hoariness o’erspread,
My body a sack of bones, broken within,
And powder’s blue stains scatter’d on my skin;
If rival fools tax thee to have loved a man,
So foul and coarse, as, O! I may seem then,
This shall say what I was; and thou shalt say,
“ Do his hurts reach me? doth my worth decay?
Or do they reach his judging mind, that he
Should now love less, what he did love to see?
That which in him was fair and delicate,
Was but the milk, which in love’s childish state
Did nurse it; who now is grown strong enough
To feed on that, which to weak tastes seems tough.”

ELEGY VI.

O, LET ME NOT SERVE SO, AS THOSE MEN SERVE

O, LET me not serve so, as those men serve,
Whom honour’s smokes at once fatten and starve,
Poorly enrich’d with great men’s words or looks;
Nor so write my name in thy loving books
As those idolatrous flatterers, which still
Their princes’ style with many realms fulfil,
Whence they no tribute have, and where no sway.
Such services I offer as shall pay
Themselves; I hate dead names. O, then let me
Favourite in ordinary, or no favourite be.
When my soul was in her own body sheathed,
Nor yet by oaths betroth’d, nor kisses breathed
Into my purgatory, faithless thee,
Thy heart seemed wax, and steel thy constancy.
So, careless flowers strew’d on the water’s face
The curled whirlpools suck, smack, and embrace,
Yet drown them; so the taper’s beamy eye
Amorously twinkling beckons the giddy fly,
Yet burns his wings; and such the devil is,
Scarce visiting them who are entirely his.
When I behold a stream, which from the spring
Doth with doubtful melodious murmuring,
Or in a speechless slumber, calmly ride
Her wedded channel’s bosom, and there chide,
And bend her brows, and swell, if any bough
Do but stoop down to kiss her upmost brow;
Yet, if her often gnawing kisses win
The traitorous banks to gape, and let her in,
She rusheth violently, and doth divorce
Her from her native and her long-kept course,
And roars, and braves it, and in gallant scorn,
In flattering eddies promising return,

She flouts her channel, which thenceforth is dry;
Then say I; “That is she, and this am I.”
Yet let not thy deep bitterness beget
Careless despair in me, for that will whet
My mind to scorn; and O, love dull’d with pain
Was ne’er so wise, nor well arm’d, as disdain.
Then with new eyes I shall survey thee, and spy
Death in thy cheeks, and darkness in thine eye,
Though hope bred faith and love; thus taught, I shall,
As nations do from Rome, from thy love fall;
My hate shall outgrow thine, and utterly
I will renounce thy dalliance; and when I
Am the recusant, in that resolute state
What hurts it me to be excommunicate?

ELEGY VII.

NATURE’S LAY IDIOT, I TAUGHT THEE TO LOVE

NATURE’S lay idiot, I taught thee to love,
And in that sophistry, O! thou dost prove
Too subtle; fool, thou didst not understand
The mystic language of the eye nor hand;
Nor couldst thou judge the difference of the air
Of sighs, and say, “This lies, this sounds despair”;
Nor by th’ eye’s water cast a malady
Desperately hot, or changing feverously.
I had not taught thee then the alphabet
Of flowers, how they, devisefully being set
And bound up, might with speechless secrecy
Deliver errands mutely, and mutually.
Remember since all thy words used to be
To every suitor, “Ay, if my friends agree;”
Since household charms, thy husband’s name to teach,
Were all the love-tricks that thy wit could reach;
And since an hour’s discourse could scarce have made
One answer in thee, and that ill array’d
In broken proverbs, and torn sentences.
Thou art not by so many duties his —
That from th’ world’s common having sever’d thee,
Inlaid thee, neither to be seen, nor see —
As mine; who have with amorous delicacies
Refined thee into a blissful paradise.
Thy graces and good works my creatures be;
I planted knowledge and life’s tree in thee;
Which O! shall strangers taste? Must I, alas!
Frame and enamel plate, and drink in glass?
Chafe wax for other’s seals? break a colt’s force,
And leave him then, being made a ready horse?

ELEGY VIII.

THE COMPARISON.

AS the sweet sweat of roses in a still,
As that which from chafed musk cat’s pores doth trill,
As the almighty balm of th’ early east,
Such are the sweat drops of my mistress’ breast;
And on her neck her skin such lustre sets,
They seem no sweat drops, but pearl carcanets.
Rank sweaty froth thy mistress’ brow defiles,
Like spermatic issue of ripe menstruous boils,
Or like the scum, which, by need’s lawless law
Enforced, Sanserra’s starvèd men did draw
From parboil’d shoes and boots, and all the rest
Which were with any sovereign fatness blest;
And like vile lying stones in saffron’d tin,
Or warts, or wheals, it hangs upon her skin.
Round as the world’s her head, on every side,
Like to the fatal ball which fell on Ide;
Or that whereof God had such jealousy,
As for the ravishing thereof we die.
Thy head is like a rough-hewn statue of jet,
Where marks for eyes, nose, mouth, are yet scarce set;
Like the first chaos, or flat seeming face
Of Cynthia, when th’ earth’s shadows her embrace.
Like Proserpine’s white beauty-keeping chest,
Or Jove’s best fortune’s urn, is her fair breast.
Thine’s like worm-eaten trunks, clothed in seal’s skin,
Or grave, that’s dust without, and stink within.
And like that slender stalk, at whose end stands
The woodbine quivering, are her arms and hands.
Like rough-bark’d elm-boughs, or the russet skin
Of men late scourged for madness, or for sin,
Like sun-parch’d quarters on the city gate,
Such is thy tann’d skin’s lamentable state;

And like a bunch of ragged carrots stand
The short swollen fingers of thy gouty hand.
Then like the chemic’s masculine equal fire,
Which in the limbec’s warm womb doth inspire
Into th’ earth’s worthless dirt a soul of gold,
Such cherishing heat her best loved part doth hold.
Thine’s like the dread mouth of a fired gun,
Or like hot liquid metals newly run
Into clay moulds, or like to that Ætna,
Where round about the grass is burnt away.
Are not your kisses then as filthy, and more,
As a worm sucking an envenom’d sore?
Doth not thy fearful hand in feeling quake,
As one which gathering flowers still fears a snake?
Is not your last act harsh and violent,
As when a plough a stony ground doth rent?
So kiss good turtles, so devoutly nice
Are priests in handling reverent sacrifice,
And such in searching wounds the surgeon is,
As we, when we embrace, or touch, or kiss.
Leave her, and I will leave comparing thus,
She and comparisons are odious.

ELEGY IX.

THE AUTUMNAL.

NO spring, nor summer beauty hath such grace
As I have seen in one autumnal face;
Young beauties force our love, and that’s a rape;
This doth but counsel, yet you cannot scape.
If ‘twere a shame to love, here ‘twere no shame;
Affections here take reverence’s name.
Were her first years the Golden Age? that’s true,
But now they’re gold oft tried, and ever new.
That was her torrid and inflaming time;
This is her tolerable tropic clime.
Fair eyes; who asks more heat than comes from hence,
He in a fever wishes pestilence.
Call not these wrinkles, graves; if graves they were,
They were Love’s graves, for else he is nowhere.
Yet lies not Love dead here, but here doth sit,
Vow’d to this trench, like an anachorite,
And here, till hers, which must be his death, come,
He doth not dig a grave, but build a tomb.
Here dwells he; though he sojourn everywhere,
In progress, yet his standing house is here;
Here, where still evening is, not noon, nor night;
Where no voluptuousness, yet all delight.
In all her words, unto all hearers fit,
You may at revels, you at council, sit.
This is love’s timber; youth his underwood;
There he, as wine in June, enrages blood;
Which then comes seasonablest, when our taste
And appetite to other things is past.
Xerxes’ strange Lydian love, the platane tree,
Was loved for age, none being so large as she;
Or else because, being young, nature did bless
Her youth with age’s glory, barrenness.

If we love things long sought, age is a thing
Which we are fifty years in compassing;
If transitory things, which soon decay,
Age must be loveliest at the latest day.
But name not winter faces, whose skin’s slack,
Lank as an unthrift’s purse, but a soul’s sack;
Whose eyes seek light within, for all here’s shade;
Whose mouths are holes, rather worn out, than made;
Whose every tooth to a several place is gone,
To vex their souls at resurrection;
Name not these living death-heads unto me,
For these, not ancient, but antique be.
I hate extremes; yet I had rather stay
With tombs than cradles, to wear out a day.
Since such love’s motion natural is, may still
My love descend, and journey down the hill,
Not panting after growing beauties; so
I shall ebb out with them who homeward go.

ELEGY X.

THE DREAM.

IMAGE of her whom I love, more than she,
Whose fair impression in my faithful heart
Makes me her medal, and makes her love me,
As kings do coins, to which their stamps impart
The value; go, and take my heart from hence,
Which now is grown too great and good for me.
Honours oppress weak spirits, and our sense
Strong objects dull; the more, the less we see.
When you are gone, and reason gone with you,
Then fantasy is queen and soul, and all;
She can present joys meaner than you do,
Convenient, and more proportional.
So, if I dream I have you, I have you,
For all our joys are but fantastical;
And so I ‘scape the pain, for pain is true;
And sleep, which locks up sense, doth lock out all.
After a such fruition I shall wake,
And, but the waking, nothing shall repent;
And shall to love more thankful sonnets make,
Than if more honour, tears, and pains were spent.
But, dearest heart and dearer image, stay;
Alas! true joys at best are dream enough;
Though you stay here, you pass too fast away,
For even at first life’s taper is a snuff.
Fill’d with her love, may I be rather grown
Mad with much heart, than idiot with none.

ELEGY XI.

THE BRACELET.

UPON THE LOSS OF HIS MISTRESS' CHAIN, FOR WHICH HE MADE SATISFACTION.

NOT that in colour it was like thy hair,
For armlets of that thou mayst let me wear;
Nor that thy hand it oft embraced and kiss'd,
For so it had that good, which oft I miss'd;
Nor for that silly old morality,
That, as these links were knit, our love should be,
Mourn I that I thy sevenfold chain have lost;
Nor for the luck sake; but the bitter cost.
O, shall twelve righteous angels, which as yet
No leaven of vile solder did admit;
Nor yet by any way have stray'd or gone
From the first state of their creation;
Angels, which heaven commanded to provide
All things to me, and be my faithful guide;
To gain new friends, to appease great enemies;
To comfort my soul, when I lie or rise;
Shall these twelve innocents, by thy severe
Sentence, dread judge, my sin's great burden bear?
Shall they be damn'd, and in the furnace thrown,
And punish'd for offenses not their own?
They save not me, they do not ease my pains,
When in that hell they're burnt and tied in chains.
Were they but crowns of France, I carèd not,
For most of these their country's natural rot,
I think, possesseth; they come here to us
So pale, so lame, so lean, so ruinous.
And howsoe'er French kings most Christian be,
Their crowns are circumcised most Jewishly.
Or were they Spanish stamps, still travelling,

That are become as Catholic as their king;
These unlick’d bear-whelps, unfiled pistolets,
That — more than cannon shot — avails or lets;
Which, negligently left unrounded, look
Like many-angled figures in the book
Of some great conjurer that would enforce
Nature, so these do justice, from her course;
Which, as the soul quickens head, feet and heart,
As streams, like veins, run through th’ earth’s every part,
Visit all countries, and have slily made
Gorgeous France, ruin’d, ragged and decay’d,
Scotland, which knew no state, proud in one day,
And mangled seventeen-headed Belgia.
Or were it such gold as that wherewithal
Almighty chemics, from each mineral
Having by subtle fire a soul out-pull’d,
Are dirtily and desperately gull’d;
I would not spit to quench the fire they’re in,
For they are guilty of much heinous sin.
But shall my harmless angels perish? Shall
I lose my guard, my ease, my food, my all?
Much hope which they would nourish will be dead.
Much of my able youth, and lustihead
Will vanish; if thou love, let them alone,
For thou wilt love me less when they are gone;
And be content that some loud squeaking crier,
Well-pleas’d with one lean threadbare groat, for hire,
May like a devil roar through every street,
And gall the finder’s conscience, if he meet.
Or let me creep to some dread conjurer,
That with fantastic schemes fills full much paper;
Which hath divided heaven in tenements,
And with whores, thieves, and murderers stuff’d his rents
So full, that though he pass them all in sin,
He leaves himself no room to enter in.
But if, when all his art and time is spent,
He say ‘twill ne’er be found; yet be content;

Receive from him that doom ungrudgingly,
Because he is the mouth of destiny.
Thou say’st, alas! the gold doth still remain,
Though it be changed, and put into a chain.
So in the first fallen angels resteth still
Wisdom and knowledge, but ‘tis turn’d to ill;
As these should do good works, and should provide
Necessities; but now must nurse thy pride.
And they are still bad angels; mine are none;
For form gives being, and their form is gone.
Pity these angels yet; their dignities
Pass Virtues, Powers, and Principalities.
But thou art resolute; thy will be done;
Yet with such anguish, as her only son
The mother in the hungry grave doth lay,
Unto the fire these martyrs I betray.
Good souls — for you give life to everything —
Good angels — for good messages you bring —
Destined you might have been to such an one,
As would have loved and worshipp’d you alone;
One that would suffer hunger, nakedness,
Yea death, ere he would make your number less;
But, I am guilty of your sad decay;
May your few fellows longer with me stay.
But O! thou wretched finder whom I hate
So, that I almost pity thy estate,
Gold being the heaviest metal amongst all,
May my most heavy curse upon thee fall.
Here fetter’d, manacled, and hang’d in chains,
First mayst thou be; then chain’d to hellish pains;
Or be with foreign gold bribed to betray
Thy country, and fail both of it and thy pay.
May the next thing thou stoop’st to reach, contain
Poison, whose nimble fume rot thy moist brain;
Or libels, or some interdicted thing,
Which negligently kept thy ruin bring.
Lust-bred diseases rot thee; and dwell with thee

Itching desire, and no ability.
May all the evils that gold ever wrought;
All mischief that all devils ever thought;
Want after plenty, poor and gouty age,
The plagues of travellers, love, marriage
Afflict thee, and at thy life’s last moment,
May thy swollen sins themselves to thee present.
    But, I forgive; repent thee, honest man!
Gold is restorative; restore it then:
But if from it thou be’st loth to depart,
Because ‘tis cordial, would ‘twere at thy heart.

ELEGY XII.

COME FATES; I FEAR YOU NOT!

COME Fates; I fear you not! All whom I owe
Are paid, but you; then ‘rest me ere I go.
But Chance from you all sovereignty hath got;
Love woundeth none but those whom Death dares not;
True if you were, and just in equity,
I should have vanquish’d her, as you did me;
Else lovers should not brave Death’s pains, and live;
But ‘tis a rule, “ Death comes not to relieve.”
Or, pale and wan Death’s terrors, are they laid
So deep in lovers, they make Death afraid?
Or — the least comfort — have I company?
O’ercame she Fates, Love, Death, as well as me?
  Yes, Fates do silk unto her distaff pay,
For ransom, which tax they on us do lay.
Love gives her youth — which is the reason why
Youths, for her sake, some wither and some die.
Poor Death can nothing give; yet, for her sake,
Still in her turn, he doth a lover take.
And if Death should prove false, she fears him not;
Our Muses, to redeem her, she hath got.
That fatal night we last kiss’d, I thus pray’d,
 — Or rather, thus despair’d, I should have said —
Kisses, and yet despair! The forbid tree
Did promise (and deceive) no more than she.
Like lambs, that see their teats, and must eat hay,
A food, whose taste hath made me pine away.
Dives, when thou saw’st bliss, and craved’st to touch
A drop of water, thy great pains were such.
Here grief wants a fresh wit, for mine being spent,
And my sighs weary, groans are all my rent.
Unable longer to endure the pain,
They break like thunder, and do bring down rain.

Thus till dry tear solder my eye, I weep;
And then, I dream, how you securely sleep,
And in your dreams do laugh at me. I hate,
And pray Love all may; he pities my state,
But says, I therein no revenge shall find;
The sun would shine, though all the world were blind.
Yet, to try my hate, Love show'd me your tear;
And I had died, had not your smile been there.
Your frown undoes me; your smile is my wealth;
And as you please to look, I have my health.
Methought, Love pitying me, when he saw this,
Gave me your hands, the backs and palms to kiss.
That cured me not, but to bear pain gave strength;
And what is lost in force, is took in length.
I call'd on Love again, who fear'd you so,
That his compassion still proved greater woe;
For, then I dream'd I was in bed with you,
But durst not feel, for fear it should not be true.
This merits not your anger, had it been;
The queen of chastity was naked seen;
And in bed not to feel, the pain I took,
Was more than for Actæon not to look;
And that breast which lay ope, I did not know,
But for the clearness, from a lump of snow;
Nor that sweet teat which on the top it bore
From the rose-bud which for my sake you wore.
These griefs to issue forth, by verse I prove;
Or turn their course by travel and new love.
All would not do; the best at last I tried;
Unable longer to hold out, I died.
And then I found I lost life, death by flying;
Who hundreds live, are but so long in dying.
Charon did let me pass; I'll him requite.
To mark the groves or shades wrongs my delight;
I'll speak but of those ghosts I found alone,
Those thousand ghosts, whereof myself made one,
All images of thee; I asked them why?

The judge told me, all they for thee did die,
And therefore had for their Elysian bliss,
In one another their own loves to kiss.
O here I miss’d not blissh, but being dead;
For lo! I dreamt, I dreamt, and waking said,
“ Heaven, if who are in thee there must dwell,
How is’t I now was there, and now I fell?”

ELEGY XIII.

HIS PARTING FROM HER.

SINCE she must go, and I must mourn, come night,
Environ me with darkness, whilst I write;
Shadow that hell unto me, which alone
I am to suffer when my love is gone.
Alas! the darkest magic cannot do it,
Thou and great hell, to boot, are shadows to it.
Should Cynthia quit thee, Venus, and each star,
It would not form one thought dark as mine are.
I could lend them obscureness now, and say
Out of my self, there should be no more day.
Such is already my self-want of sight,
Did not the fire within me force a light.
O Love, that fire and darkness should be mix'd,
Or to thy triumphs such strange torments fix'd!
Is it because thou thyself art blind, that we,
Thy martyrs, must no more each other see?
Or takest thou pride to break us on the wheel,
And view old Chaos in the pains we feel?
Or have we left undone some mutual rite,
That thus with parting thou seek'st us to spite?
No, no. The fault is mine, impute it to me,
Or rather to conspiring destiny,
Which, since I loved in jest before, decreed
That I should suffer, when I loved indeed;
And therefore, sooner now than I can say,
I saw the golden fruit, 'tis rapt away;
Or as I'd watch'd one drop in the vast stream,
And I left wealthy only in a dream.
Yet, Love, thou'rt blinder than myself in this,
To vex my dove-like friend for my amiss;
And where one sad truth may expiate
Thy wrath, to make her fortune run my fate.

So blinded justice doth, when favourites fall,
Strike them, their house, their friends, their favourites all.
Was’t not enough that thou didst dart thy fires
Into our bloods, inflaming our desires,
And madest us sigh, and blow, and pant, and burn,
And then thyself into our flames didst turn?
Was’t not enough that thou didst hazard us
To paths in love so dark and dangerous,
And those so ambush’d round with household spies,
And over all thy husband’s towering eyes,
Inflamed with th’ ugly sweat of jealousy;
Yet went we not still on in constancy?
Have we for this kept guards, like spy on spy?
Had correspondence whilst the foe stood by?
Stolen, more to sweeten them, our many blisses
Of meetings, conference, embracements, kisses?
Shadow’d with negligence our best respects?
Varied our language through all dialects
Of becks, winks, looks, and often under boards
Spoke dialogues with our feet far from our words?
Have we proved all the secrets of our art,
Yea, thy pale inwards, and thy panting heart?
And, after all this passed purgatory,
Must sad divorce make us the vulgar story?
First let our eyes be riveted quite through
Our turning brain, and both our lips grow to;
Let our arms clasp like ivy, and our fear
Freeze us together, that we may stick here,
Till Fortune, that would ruin us with the deed,
Strain his eyes open, and yet make them bleed.
For Love it cannot be, whom hitherto
I have accused, should such a mischief do.
O Fortune, thou’rt not worth my least exclaim,
And plague enough thou hast in thy own name.
Do thy great worst; my friend and I have charms,
Though not against thy strokes, against thy harms.
Rend us in sunder; thou canst not divide

Our bodies so, but that our souls are tied,
And we can love by letters still and gifts,
And thoughts and dreams; love never wanteth shifts.
I will not look upon the quickening sun,
But straight her beauty to my sense shall run;
The air shall note her soft, the fire, most pure;
Waters suggest her clear, and the earth sure.
Time shall not lose our passages; the spring,
How fresh our love was in the beginning;
The summer, how it ripen'd in the year;
And autumn, what our golden harvests were;
The winter I'll not think on to spite thee,
But count it a lost season; so shall she.
And dearest friend, since we must part, drown night
With hope of day — burdens well borne are light — ;
The cold and darkness longer hang somewhere,
Yet Phoebus equally lights all the sphere;
And what we cannot in like portion pay
The world enjoys in mass, and so we may.
Be then ever yourself, and let no woe
Win on your health, your youth, your beauty; so
Declare yourself base Fortune's enemy,
No less be your contempt than her inconstancy;
That I may grow enamour'd on your mind,
When mine own thoughts I here neglected find.
And this to the comfort of my dear I vow,
My deeds shall still be what my deeds are now;
The poles shall move to teach me ere I start;
And when I change my love, I'll change my heart.
Nay, if I wax but cold in my desire,
Think, heaven hath motion lost, and the world, fire.
Much more I could, but many words have made
That oft suspected which men most persuade.
Take therefore all in this; I love so true,
As I will never look for less in you.

ELEGY XIV.

JULIA.

HARK, news, O envy; thou shalt hear descried
My Julia; who as yet was ne’er envied.
To vomit gall in slander, swell her veins
With calumny, that hell itself disdains,
Is her continual practice; does her best,
To tear opinion e’en out of the breast
Of dearest friends, and — which is worse than vile —
Sticks jealousy in wedlock; her own child
Scapes not the showers of envy. To repeat
The monstrous fashions how, were alive to eat
Deare reputation; would to God she were
But half so loth to act vice, as to hear
My mild reproof. Lived Mantuan now again
That female Mastix to limn with his pen,
This she Chimera that hath eyes of fire,
Burning with anger — anger feeds desire —
Tongued like the night crow, whose ill boding cries
Give out for nothing but new injuries;
Her breath like to the juice in Tænarus,
That blasts the springs, though ne’er so prosperous;
Her hands, I know not how, used more to spill
The food of others than herself to fill;
But O! her mind, that Orcus, which includes
Legions of mischiefs, countless multitudes
Of formless curses, projects unmade up,
Abuses yet unfashion’d, thoughts corrupt,
Misshapen cavils, palpable untroths,
Inevitable errors, self-accusing loaths.
These, like those atoms swarming in the sun,
Throng in her bosom for creation.
I blush to give her halfe her due; yet say,
No poison’s half so bad as Julia.

ELEGY XV.

A TALE OF A CITIZEN AND HIS WIFE.

I SING no harm, good sooth, to any wight,
To lord or fool, cuckold, beggar, or knight,
To peace-teaching lawyer, proctor, or brave
Reformed or reducèd captain, knave,
Officer, juggler, or justice of peace,
Juror or judge; I touch no fat sow's grease;
I am no libeller, nor will be any,
But — like a true man — say there are too many.
I fear not *ore tenus;* for my tale
Nor count nor counsellor will look red or pale.

A citizen and his wife the other day
Both riding on one horse, upon the way
I overtook; the wench a pretty peat,
And — by her eye — well fitting for the feat.
I saw the lecherous citizen turn back
His head, and on his wife's lip steal a smack;
Whence apprehending that the man was kind,
Riding before to kiss his wife behind,
To get acquaintance with him I began
To sort discourse fit for so fine a man;
I ask'd the number of the plaguing bill;
Ask'd if the custom farmers held out still;
Of the Virginian plot, and whether Ward
The traffic of the island seas had marr'd;
Whether the Britain Burse did fill apace,
And likely were to give th' Exchange disgrace.
Of new-built Aldgate, and the Moor-field crosses,
Of store of bankrupts, and poor merchants' losses
I urgèd him to speak; but he — as mute
As an old courtier worn to his last suit —
Replies with only yeas and nays; at last

— To fit his element — my theme I cast
On tradesmen’s gains; that set his tongue a-going.
“ Alas! good sir,” quoth he, “ There is no doing
In court or city now”; she smiled, and I,
And, in my conscience, both gave him the lie
In one met thought; but he went on apace,
And at the present time with such a face
He rail’d, as fray’d me; for he gave no praise
To any but my Lord of Essex’ days;
Call’d that the age of action — ” True! “ quoth I —
“ There’s now as great an itch of bravery,
And heat of taking up, but cold lay down,
For, put to push of pay, away they run;
Our only city trades of hope now are
Bawd, tavern-keepers, whores, and scriveners.
The much of privileged kinsmen and store
Of fresh protections make the rest all poor.
In the first state of their creation
Though many stoutly stand, yet proves not one
A righteous pay-master.” Thus ran he on
In a continued rage; so void of reason
Seem’d his harsh talk, I sweat for fear of treason.
And — troth — how could I less? when in the prayer
For the protection of the wise Lord Mayor,
And his wise brethren’s worships, when one prayeth,
He swore that none could say amen with faith.
To get off him from what I glow’d to hear,
In happy time an angel did appear,
The bright sign of a loved and well-tried inn,
Where many citizens with their wives had been
Well used and often; here I pray’d him stay,
To take some due refreshment by the way.
Look, how he look’d that hid the gold, his hope,
And at return found nothing but a rope,
So he at me; refused and made away,
Though willing she pleaded a weary stay.
I found my miss, struck hands, and pray’d him tell —

To hold acquaintance still — where he did dwell.
He barely named the street, promised the wine,
But his kind wife gave me the very sign.

ELEGY XVI.

THE EXPOSTULATION.

TO make the doubt clear, that no woman’s true,
Was it my fate to prove it strong in you?
Thought I, but one had breathèd purest air;
And must she needs be false, because she’s fair?
Is it your beauty’s mark, or of your youth,
Or your perfection, not to study truth?
Or think you heaven is deaf, or hath no eyes?
Or those it hath smile at your perjuries?
Are vows so cheap with women, or the matter
Whereof they’re made, that they are writ in water,
And blown away with wind? Or doth their breath
Both hot and cold, at once make life and death?
Who could have thought so many accents sweet
Form’d into words, so may sighs should meet
As from our hearts, so many oaths, and tears
Sprinkled among, all sweeten’d by our fears,
And the divine impression of stolen kisses,
That seal’d the rest, should now prove empty blisses?
Did you draw bonds to forfeit? sign to break?
Or must we read you quite from what you speak,
And find the truth out the wrong way? or must
He first desire you false, would wish you just?
O! I profane! though most of women be
This kind of beast, my thoughts shall except thee,
My dearest love; though froward jealousy
With circumstance might urge thy inconstancy,
Sooner I’ll think the sun will cease to cheer
The teeming earth, and that forget to bear;
Sooner that rivers will run back, or Thames
With ribs of ice in June will bind his streams;
Or nature, by whose strength the world endures,
Would change her course, before you alter yours.

But O! that treacherous breast, to whom weak you
Did drift our counsels, and we both may rue,
Having his falsehood found too late; ‘twas he
That made me cast you guilty, and you me;
Whilst he, black wretch, betray’d each simple word
We spake, unto the cunning of a third.
Cursed may he be, that so our love hath slain,
And wander on the earth, wretched as Cain,
Wretched as he, and not deserve least pity.
In plaguing him, let misery be witty;
Let all eyes shun him, and he shun each eye,
Till he be noisome as his infamy;
May he without remorse deny God thrice,
And not be trusted more on his soul’s price;
And, after all self-torment, when he dies,
May wolves tear out his heart, vultures his eyes,
Swine eat his bowels, and his falser tongue
That utter’d all, be to some raven flung;
And let his carrion corse be a longer feast
To the king’s dogs, than any other beast.
Now have I cursed, let us our love revive;
In me the flame was never more alive.
I could begin again to court and praise,
And in that pleasure lengthen the short days
Of my life’s lease; like painters that do take
Delight, not in made work, but whiles they make.
I could renew those times, when first I saw
Love in your eyes, that gave my tongue the law
To like what you liked; and at masks and plays
Commend the self-same actors, the same ways;
Ask how you did, and often with intent
Of being officious, be impertinent;
All which were such soft pastimes, as in these
Love was as subtly catch’d as a disease.
But being got, it is a treasure sweet,
Which to defend is harder than to get;

And ought not be profaned, on either part,
For though ‘tis got by chance, ‘tis kept by art.

ELEGY XVII.

ON HIS MISTRESS.

By our first strange and fatal interview,
By all desires which thereof did ensue,
By our long starving hopes, by that remorse
Which my words masculine persuasive force
Begot in thee, and by the memory
Of hurts, which spies and rivals threaten'd me,
I calmly beg. But by thy father's wrath,
By all pains, which want and divorcement hath,
I conjure thee, and all the oaths which I
And thou have sworn to seal joint constancy,
Here I unswear, and overswear them thus;
Thou shalt not love by ways so dangerous.
Temper, O fair love, love's impetuous rage;
Be my true mistress still, not my feign'd page.
I'll go, and, by thy kind leave, leave behind
Thee, only worthy to nurse in my mind
Thirst to come back; O! if thou die before,
My soul from other lands to thee shall soar.
Thy else almighty beauty cannot move
Rage from the seas, nor thy love teach them love,
Nor tame wild Boreas' harshness; thou hast read
How roughly he in pieces shivered
Fair Orithea, whom he swore he loved.
Fall ill or good, 'tis madness to have proved
Dangers unurged; feed on this flattery,
That absent lovers one in th' other be.
Dissemble nothing, not a boy, nor change
Thy body's habit, nor mind; be not strange
To thyself only. All will spy in thy face
A blushing womanly discovering grace.
Richly clothed apes are call'd apes, and as soon
Eclipsed as bright, we call the moon the moon.

Men of France, changeable chameleons,
Spitals of diseases, shops of fashions,
Love's fuellers, and the rightest company
Of players, which upon the world's stage be,
Will quickly know thee, and no less, alas!
Th' indifferent Italian, as we pass
His warm land, well content to think thee page,
Will hunt thee with such lust, and hideous rage,
As Lot's fair guests were vex'd. But none of these
Nor spongy hydroptic Dutch shall thee displease,
If thou stay here. O stay here, for for thee
England is only a worthy gallery,
To walk in expectation, till from thence
Our greatest king call thee to his presence.
When I am gone, dream me some happiness;
Nor let thy looks our long-hid love confess;
Nor praise, nor dispraise me, nor bless nor curse
Openly love's force, nor in bed fright thy nurse
With midnight's startings, crying out, O! O!
Nurse, O! my love is slain; I saw him go
O'er the white Alps alone; I saw him, I,
Assail'd, fight, taken, stabb'd, bleed, fall, and die.
Augur me better chance, except dread Jove
Think it enough for me to have had thy love.

ELEGY XVIII.

VARIETY

THE heavens rejoice in motion; why should I
Abjure my so much loved variety,
And not with many youth and love divide?
Pleasure is none, if not diversified.
The sun that, sitting in the chair of light,
Sheds flame into what else so ever doth seem bright,
Is not contented at one sign to inn,
But ends his year, and with a new begin.
All things do willingly in change delight,
The fruitful mother of our appetite;
Rivers the clearer and more pleasing are,
Where their fair-spreading streams run wide and clear;
And a dead lake, that no strange bark doth greet,
Corrupts itself, and what doth live in it.
Let no man tell me such a one is fair,
And worthy all alone my love to share.
Nature in her hath done the liberal part
Of a kind mistress, and employed her art,
To make her loveable, and I aver
Him not humane, that would turn back from her.
I love her well, and would, if need were, die,
To do her service. But follows it that I
Must serve her only, when I may have choice?
The law is hard, and shall not have my voice.
The last I saw in all extremes is fair,
And holds me in the sunbeams of her hair;
Her nymph-like features such agreements have,
That I could venture with her to the grave.
Another’s brown; I like her not the worse;
Her tongue is soft and takes me with discourse.
Others, for that they well descended were,
Do in my love obtain as large a share;

And though they be not fair, ‘tis much with me
To win their love only for their degree.
And though I fail of my required ends,
The attempt is glorious and itself commends.
How happy were our sires in ancient time,
Who held plurality of loves no crime.
With them it was accounted charity
To stir up race of all indifferently;
Kindred were not exempted from the bands,
Which with the Persian still in usage stands.
Women were then no sooner ask’d than won,
And what they did was honest and well done.
But since this little Honour hath been used,
Our weak credulity hath been abused;
The golden laws of nature are repeal’d,
Which our first fathers in such reverence held;
Our liberty reversed and charters gone;
And we made servants to Opinion;
A monster in no certain shape attired,
And whose original is much desired,
Formless at first, but growing on its fashions,
And doth prescribe manners and laws to nations.
Here love received immedicable harms,
And was despoiled of his daring arms;
A greater want than is his daring eyes,
He lost those awful wings with which he flies,
His sinewy bow and those immortal darts,
With which he is wont to bruise resisting hearts.
Only some few, strong in themselves and free,
Retain the seeds of ancient liberty,
Following that part of love although depress’d,
Yet make a throne for him within their breast,
In spite of modern censures him avowing
Their sovereign, all service him allowing.
Amongst which troop although I am the least,
Yet equal in perfection with the best,
I glory in subjection of his hand,

Nor ever did decline his least command;
For in whatever form the message came
My heart did open and receive the same,
But time will in his course a point descry
When I this lovèd service must deny;
For our allegiance temporary is;
With firmer age returns our liberties.
What time in years and judgment we reposed,
Shall not so easily be to change disposed,
Nor to the art of several eyes obeying,
But beauty with true worth securely weighing;
Which being found assembled in some one
We'll leave her ever, and love her alone.

ELEGY XIX.

LOVES PROGRESS

WHOEVER loves, if he do not propose
The right true end of love, he’s one that goes
To sea for nothing but to make him sick.
Love is a bear-whelp born: if we o’er-lick
Our love, and force it new strange shapes to take,
We err, and of a lump a monster make.
Were not a calf a monster, that were grown
Faced like a man, though better than his own?
Perfection is in unity; prefer
One woman first, and then one thing in her.
I, when I value gold, may think upon
The ductileness, the application,
The wholesomeness, the ingenuity,
From rust, from soil, from fire ever free;
But if I love it, ‘tis because ‘tis made
By our new nature, use, the soul of trade.
All this in women we might think upon,
— If women had them — and yet love but one.
Can men more injure women than to say
They love them for that, by which they’re not they?
Makes virtue woman? must I cool my blood
Till I both be, and find one wise and good?
May barren angels love so. But if we
Make love to woman, virtue is not she,
As beauty is not, nor wealth. He that strays thus
From her to hers is more adulterous
Than if he took her maid. Search every sphere
And firmament, our Cupid is not there.
He’s an infernal God, and underground
With Pluto dwells, where gold and fire abound.
Men to such gods their sacrificing coals
Did not on altars lay, but pits and holes.

Although we see celestial bodies move
Above the earth, the earth we till and love.
So we her airs contemplate, words and heart,
And virtues, but we love the centric part.
    Nor is the soul more worthy, or more fit
For love, than this, as infinite as it.
But in attaining this desired place
How much they err, that set out at the face?
The hair a forest is of ambushes,
Of springes, snares, fetters, and manacles;
The brow becalms us when ‘tis smooth and plain,
And when ‘tis wrinkled, shipwrecks us again;
Smooth, ‘tis a paradise, where we would have
Immortal stay, but wrinkled ‘tis a grave.
The nose, like to the first meridian, runs
Not ‘twixt an east and west, but ‘twixt two suns;
It leaves a cheek, a rosy hemisphere,
On either side, and then directs us where
Upon the islands fortunate we fall,
Not faint Canaries, but ambrosial,
Her swelling lips, to which when we are come,
We anchor there, and think ourselves at home,
For they seem all; there Sirens’ songs and there
Wise Delphic oracles do fill the ear.
There, in a creek where chosen pearls do swell,
The remora, her cleaving tongue, doth dwell.
These and the glorious promontory, her chin,
O’erpast, and the straight Hellespont between
The Sestos and Abydos of her breasts,
Not of two lovers, but two loves, the nests,
Succeeds a boundless sea, but yet thine eye
Some island moles may scattered there descry;
And sailing towards her India, in that way
Shall at her fair Atlantic navel stay.
Though there the current be the pilot made,
Yet, ere thou be where thou shouldst be embay’d,
Thou shalt upon another forest set,

Where many shipwreck, and no further get.
When thou art there, consider what this chase
Misspent by thy beginning at the face.
Rather set out below; practise thy art;
Some symmetry the foot hath with that part
Which thou dost seek, and is thy map for that,
Lovely enough to stop, but not stay at.
Least subject to disguise and change it is;
Men say the devil never can change his;
It is the emblem that hath figured
Firmness; ‘tis the first part that comes to bed.
Civility we see refined; the kiss,
Which at the face began, transplanted is,
Since to the hand, since to the imperial knee,
Now at the papal foot delights to be.
If kings think that the nearer way, and do
Rise from the foot, lovers may do so too;
For, as free spheres move faster far than can
Birds, whom the air resists, so may that man
Which goes this empty and ethereal way,
Than if at beauty’s elements he stay.
Rich Nature in women wisely made
Two purses, and their mouths aversely laid.
They then which to the lower tribute owe,
That way which that exchequer looks must go;
He which doth not, his error is as great,
As who by clyster gives the stomach meat.

ELEGY XX.

TO HIS MISTRESS GOING TO BED.

COME, madam, come, all rest my powers defy;
Until I labour, I in labour lie.
The foe ofttimes, having the foe in sight,
Is tired with standing, though he never fight.
Off with that girdle, like heaven’s zone glittering,

But a far fairer world encompassing.
Unpin that spangled breast-plate, which you wear,
That th’ eyes of busy fools may be stopp’d there.
Unlace yourself, for that harmonious chime
Tells me from you that now it is bed-time.
Off with that happy busk, which I envy,
That still can be, and still can stand so nigh.
Your gown going off such beauteous state reveals,
As when from flowery meads th’ hill’s shadow steals.
Off with your wiry coronet, and show
The hairy diadems which on you do grow.
Off with your hose and shoes; then softly tread
In this love’s hallow’d temple, this soft bed.
In such white robes heaven’s angels used to be
Revealed to men; thou, angel, bring’st with thee
A heaven-like Mahomet’s paradise; and though
Ill spirits walk in white, we easily know
By this these angels from an evil sprite;
Those set our hairs, but these our flesh upright.
  Licence my roving hands, and let them go
Before, behind, between, above, below.
O, my America, my Newfoundland,
My kingdom, safest when with one man mann’d,
My mine of precious stones, my empery;
How am I blest in thus discovering thee!
To enter in these bonds, is to be free;
Then, where my hand is set, my soul shall be.
  Full nakedness! All joys are due to thee;
As souls unbodied, bodies unclothed must be
To taste whole joys. Gems which you women use
Are like Atlanta’s ball cast in men’s views;
That, when a fool’s eye lighteth on a gem,
His earthly soul might court that, not them.
Like pictures, or like books’ gay coverings made
For laymen, are all women thus array’d.
Themselves are only mystic books, which we
— Whom their imputed grace will dignify —

Must see reveal’d. Then, since that I may know,
As liberally as to thy midwife show
Thyself; cast all, yea, this white linen hence;
There is no penance due to innocence:
To teach thee, I am naked first; why then,
What needst thou have more covering than a man?

ELEGY XX (ALTERNATE)

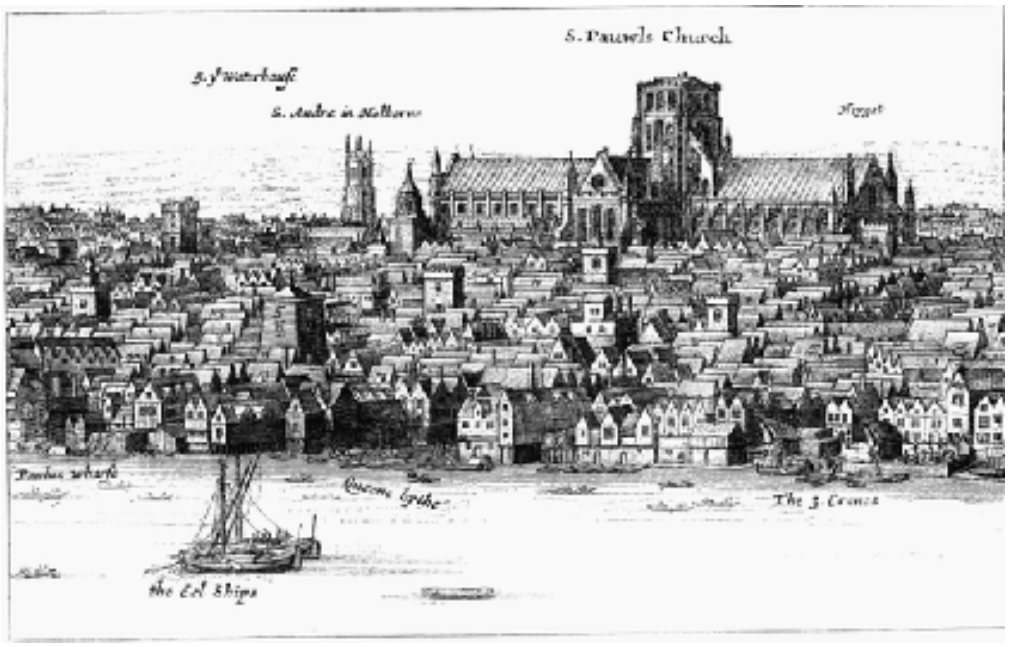
LOVE'S WAR

Till I have peace with thee, warr other Men,
And when I have peace, can I leave thee then?
All other Warrs are scrupulous; Only thou
O fayr free Citty, maist thyselfe allow
To any one: In Flanders, who can tell
Whether the Master presse; or men rebell?
Only we know, that which all Ideots say,
They beare most blows which come to part the fray.
France in her lunatique giddines did hate
Ever our men, yea and our God of late;
Yet she relyes upon our Angels well,
Which nere returne; no more than they which fell.
Sick Ireland is with a strange warr possest
Like to an Ague; now raging, now at rest;
Which time will cure: yet it must doe her good
If she were purg'd, and her head vayne let blood.
And Midas joyes our Spanish journeys give,
We touch all gold, but find no food to live.
And I should be in the hott parching clime,
To dust and ashes turn'd before my time.
To mew me in a Ship, is to inthrall
Mee in a prison, that weare like to fall;
Or in a Cloyster; save that there men dwell
In a calme heaven, here in a swaggering hell.
Long voyages are long consumptions,
And ships are carts for executions.
Yea they are Deaths; Is't not all one to flye
Into an other World, as t'is to dye?
Here lett mee warr; in these armes lett mee lye;
Here lett mee parle, batter, bleede, and dye.
Thyne armes imprison me, and myne armes thee,
Thy hart thy ransome is, take myne for mee.
Other men war that they their rest may gayne;

But wee will rest that wee may fight agayne.
Those warrs the ignorant, these th'experienc'd love,
There wee are alwayes under, here above.
There Engins farr off breed a just true feare,
Neere thrusts, pikes, stabs, yea bullets hurt not here.
There lyes are wrongs; here safe uprightly ly;
Tltere men kill men, we'will make one by and by,
Thou nothing; I not halfe so much shall do
In these Warrs, as they may which from us two
Shall spring. Thousands wee see which travaile not
To warrs; But stay swords, armes, and shott
To make at home; And shall not I do then
More glorious service, staying to make men?

DIVINE POEMS

This collection of poems was first published in 1607, at a time when Donne was serving as a minor lawyer, following his dismissal for marrying his employer's daughter without permission. The poems reveal his fervent faith and devout nature, somewhat at odds with the risqué and witty content of some of the songs and sonnets. Donne later became a priest of the Anglican Church in 1615 and was appointed royal chaplain later that year. In 1621 he was named Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral. He attained eminence as a preacher, delivering sermons that are regarded by many as the most eloquent of his time.



St Paul's Cathedral, close to the time that Donne became Dean

CONTENTS

TO THE EARL OF DONCASTER WITH SIX HOLY SONNETS.
LA CORONA.
ANNUNCIATION.
NATIVITY.
TEMPLE.
CRUCIFYING.
RESURRECTION.
ASCENSION.
TO THE LADY MAGDALEN HERBERT, OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

TO THE EARL OF DONCASTER WITH SIX HOLY SONNETS.

SEE, sir, how, as the sun’s hot masculine flame
  Begets strange creatures on Nile’s dirty slime,
  In me your fatherly yet lusty rhyme
 — For these songs are their fruits — have wrought the same.
But though th’ engend’ring force from which they came
  Be strong enough, and Nature doth admit
  Seven to be born at once; I send as yet
But six; they say the seventh hath still some maim.
  I choose your judgment, which the same degree
Doth with her sister, your invention, hold,
  As fire these drossy rhymes to purify,
Or as elixir, to change them to gold.
  You are that alchemist, which always had
  Wit, whose one spark could make good things of bad.

LA CORONA.

Deign at my hands this crown of prayer and praise,
Weaved in my lone devout melancholy,
Thou which of good hast, yea, art treasury,
All changing unchanged Ancient of days.
But do not with a vile crown of frail bays
Reward my Muse's white sincerity;
But what Thy thorny crown gain'd, that give me,
A crown of glory, which doth flower always.
The ends crown our works, but Thou crown'st our ends,
For at our ends begins our endless rest.
The first last end, now zealously possess'd,
With a strong sober thirst my soul attends.
'Tis time that heart and voice be lifted high;
Salvation to all that will is nigh.

ANNUNCIATION.

Salvation to all that will is nigh;
That All, which always is all everywhere,
Which cannot sin, and yet all sins must bear,
Which cannot die, yet cannot choose but die,
Lo! faithful Virgin, yields Himself to lie
In prison, in thy womb; and though He there
Can take no sin, nor thou give, yet He'll wear,
Taken from thence, flesh, which death's force may try.
Ere by the spheres time was created thou
Wast in His mind, who is thy Son, and Brother;
Whom thou conceivest, conceived; yea, thou art now
Thy Maker's maker, and thy Father's mother,
Thou hast light in dark, and shutt'st in little room
Immensity, cloister'd in thy dear womb.

NATIVITY.

Immensity, cloister'd in thy dear womb,
Now leaves His well-beloved imprisonment.
There he hath made himself to his intent
Weak enough, now into our world to come.
But O! for thee, for Him, hath th' inn no room?
Yet lay Him in this stall, and from th' orient,
Stars, and wise men will travel to prevent
The effects of Herod's jealous general doom.
See'st thou, my soul, with thy faith's eye, how He
Which fills all place, yet none holds Him, doth lie?
Was not His pity towards thee wondrous high,
That would have need to be pitied by thee?
Kiss Him, and with Him into Egypt go,
With His kind mother, who partakes thy woe.

TEMPLE.

With His kind mother, who partakes thy woe,
Joseph, turn back; see where your child doth sit,
Blowing, yea blowing out those sparks of wit,
Which Himself on the doctors did bestow.
The Word but lately could not speak, and lo!
It suddenly speaks wonders; whence comes it,
That all which was, and all which should be writ,
A shallow seeming child should deeply know?
His Godhead was not soul to His manhood,
Nor had time mellow'd Him to this ripeness;
But as for one which hath a long task, 'tis good,
With the sun to begin His business,
He in His age's morning thus began,
By miracles exceeding power of man.

CRUCIFYING.

By miracles exceeding power of man,
He faith in some, envy in some begat,
For, what weak spirits admire, ambitious hate:

In both affections many to Him ran.
But O! the worst are most, they will and can,
Alas! and do, unto th' Immaculate,
Whose creature Fate is, now prescribe a fate,
Measuring self-life's infinity to span,
Nay to an inch. Lo! where condemned He
Bears His own cross, with pain, yet by and by
When it bears him, He must bear more and die.
Now Thou art lifted up, draw me to Thee,
And at Thy death giving such liberal dole,
Moist with one drop of Thy blood my dry soul.

RESURRECTION.

Moist with one drop of Thy blood, my dry soul
Shall — though she now be in extreme degree
Too stony hard, and yet too fleshly — be
Freed by that drop, from being starved, hard or foul,
And life by this death abled shall control
Death, whom Thy death slew; nor shall to me
Fear of first or last death bring misery,
If in thy life-book my name thou enroll.
Flesh in that long sleep is not putrified,
But made that there, of which, and for which it was;
Nor can by other means be glorified.
May then sin's sleep and death soon from me pass,
That waked from both, I again risen may
Salute the last and everlasting day.

ASCENSION.

Salute the last and everlasting day,
Joy at th' uprising of this Sun, and Son,
Ye whose true tears, or tribulation
Have purely wash'd, or burnt your drossy clay.
Behold, the Highest, parting hence away,
Lightens the dark clouds, which He treads upon;

Nor doth He by ascending show alone,
But first He, and He first enters the way.
O strong Ram, which hast batter’d heaven for me!
Mild Lamb, which with Thy Blood hast mark’d the path!
Bright Torch, which shinest, that I the way may see!
O, with Thy own Blood quench Thy own just wrath;
And if Thy Holy Spirit my Muse did raise,
Deign at my hands this crown of prayer and praise.

TO THE LADY MAGDALEN HERBERT, OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

HER of your name, whose fair inheritance
Bethina was, and jointure Magdalo,
An active faith so highly did advance,
That she once knew, more than the Church did know,
The Resurrection; so much good there is
Deliver’d of her, that some Fathers be
Loth to believe one woman could do this;
But think these Magdalens were two or three.
Increase their number, Lady, and their fame;
To their devotion add your innocence;
Take so much of th’ example as of the name,
The latter half; and in some recompense,
That they did harbour Christ Himself, a guest,
Harbour these hymns, to His dear Name address’d.

HOLY SONNETS

This collection is a series of devotional poems, composed in 1609 and 1610, in a period of great personal distress for Donne. He was facing physical and financial hardship, as well as religious turmoil, as he considered converting to Anglicanism... *The Holy Sonnets* reflect these various anxieties. Many of the poems were circulated in manuscript form during Donne's life, though their personal nature evidently reveals Donne's reluctance to have them published officially.

The increasing gloominess of Donne's tone may also be observed in the religious works that he began writing during the same period. His early belief in the value of scepticism now gave way to a firm faith in the traditional teachings of the Bible. Having converted to the Anglican Church, Donne focused his literary career on religious literature. He quickly became noted for his sermons and religious poems. The lines of these sermons would come to influence future works of English literature, such as Ernest Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls, which took its title from a passage in Meditation XVII of Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, and Thomas Merton's No Man is an Island, which took its title from the same source.

Towards the end of his life Donne wrote works that challenged death, and the fear that it inspired in many men, on the grounds of his belief that those who die are sent to Heaven to live eternally. One example of this challenge is his *Holy Sonnet X, Death Be Not Proud*, from which come the famous lines "Death, be not proud, though some have called thee / Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so." Even as he lay dying during Lent in 1631, he rose from his sickbed and delivered the *Death's Duel* sermon, which was later described as his own funeral sermon. *Death's Duel* portrays life as a steady descent to suffering and death, yet sees hope in salvation and immortality through an embrace of God, Christ and the Resurrection.

Donne commissioned this portrait of himself only a few months before his death. It depicts how he expected to appear when he arose from the grave at the Apocalypse. Once completed, the poet hung the portrait on his wall as a reminder of the 'transience of life'.

CONTENTS

THOU HAST MADE ME, AND SHALL THY WORK DECAY?
AS DUE BY MANY TITLES I RESIGN
O! MIGHT THOSE SIGHS AND TEARS RETURN AGAIN
O, MY BLACK SOUL, NOW THOU ART SUMMONED
I AM A LITTLE WORLD MADE CUNNINGLY
THIS IS MY PLAY'S LAST SCENE; HERE HEAVENS APPOINT
AT THE ROUND EARTH'S IMAGINED CORNERS BLOW
IF FAITHFUL SOULS BE ALIKE GLORIFIED
IF POISONOUS MINERALS, AND IF THAT TREE
DEATH, BE NOT PROUD, THOUGH SOME HAVE CALLED THEE
SPIT IN MY FACE, YOU JEWS, AND PIERCE MY SIDE
WHY ARE WE BY ALL CREATURES WAITED ON?
WHAT IF THIS PRESENT WERE THE WORLD'S LAST NIGHT?
BATTER MY HEART, THREE-PERSON'D GOD; FOR YOU
WILT THOU LOVE GOD AS HE THEE?
FATHER, PART OF HIS DOUBLE INTEREST
SINCE SHE WHOM I LOVED HATH PAID HER LAST DEBT
SHOW ME, DEAR CHRIST, THY SPOUSE SO BRIGHT AND CLEAR
OH, TO VEX ME, CONTRARIES MEET IN ONE

I.

THOU HAST MADE ME, AND SHALL THY WORK DECAY?

THOU hast made me, and shall Thy work decay?
Repair me now, for now mine end doth haste;
I run to death, and Death meets me as fast,
And all my pleasures are like yesterday.
I dare not move my dim eyes any way;
Despair behind, and Death before doth cast
Such terror, and my feeble flesh doth waste
By sin in it, which it towards hell doth weigh.
Only Thou art above, and when towards Thee
By Thy leave I can look, I rise again;
But our old subtle foe so tempteth me,
That not one hour myself I can sustain.
Thy grace may wing me to prevent his art
And thou like adamant draw mine iron heart.

II.

AS DUE BY MANY TITLES I RESIGN

AS due by many titles I resign
Myself to thee, O God. First I was made
By Thee; and for Thee, and when I was decay'd
Thy blood bought that, the which before was Thine.
I am Thy son, made with Thyself to shine,
Thy servant, whose pains Thou hast still repaid,
Thy sheep, Thine image, and — till I betray'd
Myself — a temple of Thy Spirit divine.
Why doth the devil then usurp on me?
Why doth he steal, nay ravish, that's Thy right?
Except Thou rise and for Thine own work fight,
O! I shall soon despair, when I shall see
That Thou lovest mankind well, yet wilt not choose me,
And Satan hates me, yet is loth to lose me.

III.

O! MIGHT THOSE SIGHS AND TEARS RETURN AGAIN

O! might those sighs and tears return again
Into my breast and eyes, which I have spent,
That I might in this holy discontent
Mourn with some fruit, as I have mourn'd in vain.
In mine idolatry what showers of rain
Mine eyes did waste? what griefs my heart did rent?
That sufferance was my sin, I now repent;
'Cause I did suffer, I must suffer pain.
Th' hydroptic drunkard, and night-scouting thief,
The itchy lecher, and self-tickling proud
Have the remembrance of past joys, for relief
Of coming ills. To poor me is allow'd
No ease; for long, yet vehement grief hath been
Th' effect and cause, the punishment and sin.

IV.

O, MY BLACK SOUL, NOW THOU ART SUMMONED

O, my black soul, now thou art summoned
By sickness, Death’s herald and champion;
Thou’rt like a pilgrim, which abroad hath done
Treason, and durst not turn to whence he’s fled;
Or like a thief, which till death’s doom be read,
Wisheth himself deliver’d from prison,
But damn’d and haled to execution,
Wisheth that still he might be imprisoned.
Yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not lack;
But who shall give thee that grace to begin?
O, make thyself with holy mourning black,
And red with blushing, as thou art with sin;
Or wash thee in Christ’s blood, which hath this might,
That being red, it dyes red souls to white.

V.

I AM A LITTLE WORLD MADE CUNNINGLY

I am a little world made cunningly
Of elements, and an angelic sprite;
But black sin hath betray’d to endless night
My world’s both parts, and, O, both parts must die.
You which beyond that heaven which was most high
Have found new spheres, and of new land can write,
Pour new seas in mine eyes, that so I might
Drown my world with my weeping earnestly,
Or wash it if it must be drown’d no more.
But O, it must be burnt; alas! the fire
Of lust and envy burnt it heretofore,
And made it fouler; let their flames retire,
And burn me, O Lord, with a fiery zeal
Of Thee and Thy house, which doth in eating heal.

VI.

THIS IS MY PLAY’S LAST SCENE; HERE HEAVENS APPOINT

This is my play’s last scene; here heavens appoint
My pilgrimage’s last mile; and my race
Idly, yet quickly run, hath this last pace;
My span’s last inch, my minute’s latest point;
And gluttonous Death will instantly unjoint
My body and soul, and I shall sleep a space;
But my ever-waking part shall see that face,
Whose fear already shakes my every joint.
Then, as my soul to heaven her first seat takes flight,
And earth-born body in the earth shall dwell,
So fall my sins, that all may have their right,
To where they’re bred and would press me to hell.
Impute me righteous, thus purged of evil,
For thus I leave the world, the flesh, the devil.

VII.

AT THE ROUND EARTH'S IMAGINED CORNERS BLOW

At the round earth's imagined corners blow
Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go;
All whom the flood did, and fire shall o'erthrow,
All whom war, dea[r]th, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance hath slain, and you, whose eyes
Shall behold God, and never taste death's woe.
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space;
For, if above all these my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of Thy grace,
When we are there. Here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent, for that's as good
As if Thou hadst seal'd my pardon with Thy blood.

VIII.

IF FAITHFUL SOULS BE ALIKE GLORIFIED

If faithful souls be alike glorified
As angels, then my father's soul doth see,
And adds this even to full felicity,
That valiantly I hell's wide mouth o'erstride.
But if our minds to these souls be descried
By circumstances, and by signs that be
Apparent in us not immediately,
How shall my mind's white truth by them be tried?
They see idolatrous lovers weep and mourn,
And stile blasphemous conjurers to call
On Jesu's name, and pharisaical
Dissemblers feign devotion. Then turn,
O pensive soul, to God, for He knows best
Thy grief, for He put it into my breast.

IX.

IF POISONOUS MINERALS, AND IF THAT TREE

If poisonous minerals, and if that tree,
Whose fruit threw death on (else immortal) us,
If lecherous goats, if serpents envious
Cannot be damn’d, alas! why should I be?
Why should intent or reason, born in me,
Make sins, else equal, in me more heinous?
And, mercy being easy, and glorious
To God, in His stern wrath why threatens He?
But who am I, that dare dispute with Thee?
O God, O! of Thine only worthy blood,
And my tears, make a heavenly Lethean flood,
And drown in it my sin’s black memory.
That Thou remember them, some claim as debt;
I think it mercy if Thou wilt forget.

X.

DEATH, BE NOT PROUD, THOUGH SOME HAVE CALLED THEE

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those, whom thou think’st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy picture[s] be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul’s delivery.
Thou’rt slave to Fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy, or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke; why swell’st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

XI.

SPIT IN MY FACE, YOU JEWS, AND PIERCE MY SIDE

Spit in my face, you Jews, and pierce my side,
Buffet, and scoff, scourge, and crucify me,
For I have sinn’d, and sinne’, and only He,
Who could do no iniquity, hath died.
But by my death can not be satisfied
My sins, which pass the Jews’ impiety.
They kill’d once an inglorious man, but I
Crucify him daily, being now glorified.
O let me then His strange love still admire;
Kings pardon, but He bore our punishment;
And Jacob came clothed in vile harsh attire,
But to supplant, and with gainful intent;
God clothed Himself in vile man’s flesh, that so
He might be weak enough to suffer woe.

XII.

WHY ARE WE BY ALL CREATURES WAITED ON?

Why are we by all creatures waited on?
Why do the prodigal elements supply
Life and food to me, being more pure than I,
Simpler and further from corruption?
Why brook’st thou, ignorant horse, subjection?
Why dost thou, bull and boar, so sillily
Dissemble weakness, and by one man’s stroke die,
Whose whole kind you might swallow and feed upon?
Weaker I am, woe’s me, and worse than you;
You have not sinn’d, nor need be timorous.
But wonder at a greater, for to us
Created nature doth these things subdue;
But their Creator, whom sin, nor nature tied,
For us, His creatures, and His foes, hath died.

XIII.

WHAT IF THIS PRESENT WERE THE WORLD'S LAST NIGHT?

What if this present were the world's last night?
Mark in my heart, O soul, where thou dost dwell,
The picture of Christ crucified, and tell
Whether His countenance can thee affright.
Tears in His eyes quench the amazing light;
Blood fills his frowns, which from His pierced head fell;
And can that tongue adjudge thee unto hell,
Which pray'd forgiveness for His foes' fierce spite?
No, no; but as in my idolatry
I said to all my profane mistresses,
Beauty of pity, foulness only is
A sign of rigour; so I say to thee,
To wicked spirits are horrid shapes assign'd;
This beauteous form assures a piteous mind.

XIV.

BATTER MY HEART, THREE-PERSON’D GOD; FOR YOU

Batter my heart, three-person’d God; for you
As yet but knock; breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise, and stand, o’erthrow me, and bend
Your force, to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
I, like an usurp’d town, to another due,
Labour to admit you, but O, to no end.
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captived, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,
But am betroth’d unto your enemy;
Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

XV.

WILT THOU LOVE GOD AS HE THEE?

Wilt thou love God as he thee? then digest,
My soul, this wholesome meditation,
How God the Spirit, by angels waited on
In heaven, doth make His temple in thy breast.
The Father having begot a Son most blest,
And still begetting — for he ne’er begun —
Hath deign’d to choose thee by adoption,
Co-heir to His glory, and Sabbath’ endless rest.
And as a robb’d man, which by search doth find
His stolen stuff sold, must lose or buy it again,
The Sun of glory came down, and was slain,
Us whom He had made, and Satan stole, to unbind.
‘Twas much, that man was made like God before,
But, that God should be made like man, much more.

XVI.

FATHER, PART OF HIS DOUBLE INTEREST

Father, part of His double interest
Unto Thy kingdom Thy Son gives to me;
His jointure in the knotty Trinity
He keeps, and gives to me his death’s conquest.
This Lamb, whose death with life the world hath blest,
Was from the world’s beginning slain, and He
Hath made two wills, which with the legacy
Of His and Thy kingdom do thy sons invest.
Yet such are these laws, that men argue yet
Whether a man those statutes can fulfil.
None doth; but thy all-healing grace and Spirit
Revive again what law and letter kill.
Thy law’s abridgement, and Thy last command
Is all but love; O let this last Will stand!

XVII.

SINCE SHE WHOM I LOVED HATH PAID HER LAST DEBT

Since she whom I loved hath paid her last debt
To Nature, and to hers, and my good is dead,
And her soul early into heaven ravishèd,
Wholly on heavenly things my mind is set.
Here the admiring her my mind did whet
To seek thee, God; so streams do show the head;
But though I have found thee, and thou my thirst hast fed,
A holy thirsty dropsy melts me yet.
But why should I beg more love, whenas thou
Dost woo my soul, for hers offering all thine:
And dost not only fear lest I allow
My love to saints and angels, things divine,
But in thy tender jealousy dost doubt
Lest the world, flesh, yea, devil put thee out.

XVIII.

SHOW ME, DEAR CHRIST, THY SPOUSE SO BRIGHT AND CLEAR

Show me, dear Christ, thy spouse so bright and clear.
What! is it she which on the other shore
Goes richly painted? or which, robbed and tore,
Laments and mourns in Germany and here?
Sleeps she a thousand, then peeps up one year?
Is she self-truth, and errs? now new, now outwore?
Doth she, and did she, and shall she evermore
On one, on seven, or on no hill appear?
Dwells she with us, or like adventuring knights
First travel we to seek, and then make love?
Betray, kind husband, thy spouse to our sights,
And let mine amorous soul court thy mild dove,
Who is most true and pleasing to thee then
When she is embraced and open to most men.

XIX

OH, TO VEX ME, CONTRARIES MEET IN ONE

Oh, to vex me, contraries meet in one:
Inconstancy unnaturally hath begot
A constant habit; that when I would not
I change in vows, and in devotion.
As humorous is my contrition
As my profane love, and as soon forgot:
As riddlingly distempered, cold and hot,
As praying, as mute; as infinite, as none.
I durst not view heaven yesterday; and today
In prayers and flattering speeches I court God:
Tomorrow I quake with true fear of his rod.
So my devout fits come and go away
Like a fantastic ague; save that here
Those are my best days, when I shake with feare.

OTHER DIVINE POEMS

CONTENTS

THE CROSS.
RESURRECTION, IMPERFECT.
THE ANNUNCIATION AND PASSION.
GOOD-FRIDAY, 1613, RIDING WESTWARD.
A LITANY.
UPON THE TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS BY SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, AND THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE, HIS SISTER.
ODE: VENGEANCE WILL SIT ABOVE OUR FAULTS
TO MR. TILMAN AFTER HE HAD TAKEN ORDERS.
A HYMN TO CHRIST, AT THE AUTHOR'S LAST GOING INTO GERMANY.
THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMY, FOR THE MOST PART ACCORDING TO TREMELLIUS.
HYMN TO GOD, MY GOD, IN MY SICKNESS.
A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER.
TO GEORGE HERBERT, SENT HIM WITH ONE OF MY SEALS OF THE ANCHOR AND CHRIST.
A SHEAF OF SNAKES USED HERETOFORE TO BE MY SEAL, THE CREST OF OUR POOR FAMILY.
TRANSLATED OUT OF GAZÆUS, "VOTA AMICO FACTA," FOL. 160.

THE CROSS.

SINCE Christ embraced the cross itself, dare I
His image, th’ image of His cross, deny?
Would I have profit by the sacrifice,
And dare the chosen altar to despise?
It bore all other sins, but is it fit
That it should bear the sin of scorning it?
Who from the picture would avert his eye,
How would he fly his pains, who there did die?
From me no pulpit, nor misgrounded law,
Nor scandal taken, shall this cross withdraw,
It shall not, for it cannot; for the loss
Of this cross were to me another cross.
Better were worse, for no affliction,
No cross is so extreme, as to have none.
Who can blot out the cross, with th’ instrument
Of God dew’d on me in the Sacrament?
Who can deny me power, and liberty
To stretch mine arms, and mine own cross to be?
Swim, and at every stroke thou art thy cross;
The mast and yard make one, where seas do toss;
Look down, thou spiest out crosses in small things;
Look up, thou seest birds raised on crossed wings;
All the globe’s frame, and spheres, is nothing else
But the meridians crossing parallels.
Material crosses then, good physic be,
But yet spiritual have chief dignity.
These for extracted chemic medicine serve,
And cure much better, and as well preserve.
Then are you your own physic, or need none,
When still’d or purged by tribulation;
For when that cross ungrudged unto you sticks,
Then are you to yourself a crucifix.
As perchance carvers do not faces make,
But that away, which hid them there, do take;

Let crosses, so, take what hid Christ in thee,
And be His image, or not His, but He.
But, as oft alchemists do coiners prove,
So may a self-despising get self-love;
And then, as worst surfeits of best meats be,
So is pride, issued from humility,
For ‘tis no child, but monster; therefore cross
Your joy in crosses, else, ‘tis double loss.
And cross thy senses, else both they and thou
Must perish soon, and to destruction bow.
For if the eye seek good objects, and will take
No cross from bad, we cannot ‘scape a snake.
So with harsh, hard, sour, stinking; cross the rest;
Make them indifferent; call, nothing best.
But most the eye needs crossing, that can roam,
And move; to th’ others th’ objects must come home.
And cross thy heart; for that in man alone
Pants downwards, and hath palpitation.
Cross those dejections, when it downward tends,
And when it to forbidden heights pretends.
And as the brain through bony walls doth vent
By sutures, which a cross’s form present,
So when thy brain works, ere thou utter it,
Cross and correct concupiscence of wit.
Be covetous of crosses; let none fall;
Cross no man else, but cross thyself in all.
Then doth the cross of Christ work faithfully
Within our hearts, when we love harmlessly
That cross’s pictures much, and with more care
That cross’s children, which our crosses are.

RESURRECTION, IMPERFECT.

SLEEP, sleep, old sun, thou canst not have repass'd,
As yet, the wound thou took'st on Friday last;
Sleep then, and rest; the world may bear thy stay;
A better sun rose before thee to-day;
Who — not content to enlighten all that dwell
On the earth's face, as thou — enlighten'd hell,
And made the dark fires languish in that vale,
As at thy presence here our fires grow pale;
Whose body, having walk'd on earth, and now
Hasting to heaven, would — that He might allow
Himself unto all stations, and fill all —
For these three days become a mineral.
He was all gold when He lay down, but rose
All tincture, and doth not alone dispose
Leaden and iron wills to good, but is
Of power to make e'en sinful flesh like his.
Had one of those, whose credulous piety
Thought that a soul one might discern and see
Go from a body, at this sepulchre been,
And, issuing from the sheet, this body seen,
He would have justly thought this body a soul,
If not of any man, yet of the whole.

Desunt Caetera

THE ANNUNCIATION AND PASSION.

TAMELY, frail body, abstain to-day; to-day
My soul eats twice, Christ hither and away.
She sees Him man, so like God made in this,
That of them both a circle emblem is,
Whose first and last concur; this doubtful day
Of feast or fast, Christ came, and went away;
She sees Him nothing, twice at once, who's all;
She sees a cedar plant itself, and fall;
Her Maker put to making, and the head
Of life at once not yet alive, yet dead;
She sees at once the Virgin Mother stay
Reclused at home, public at Golgotha;
Sad and rejoiced she's seen at once, and seen
At almost fifty, and at scarce fifteen;
At once a son is promised her, and gone;
Gabriell gives Christ to her, He her to John;
Not fully a mother, she's in orbity;
At once receiver and the legacy.
All this, and all between, this day hath shown,
Th' abridgement of Christ's story, which makes one —
As in plain maps, the furthest west is east —
Of th' angels *Ave*, and *Consummatum est*.
How well the Church, God's Court of Faculties,
Deals, in sometimes, and seldom joining these.
As by the self-fix'd Pole we never do
Direct our course, but the next star thereto,
Which shows where th'other is, and which we say
— Because it strays not far — doth never stray,
So God by His Church, nearest to him, we know,
And stand firm, if we by her motion go.
His Spirit, as His fiery pillar, doth
Lead, and His Church, as cloud; to one end both.
This Church by letting those days join, hath shown
Death and conception in mankind is one;

Or ‘twas in Him the same humility,
That He would be a man, and leave to be;
Or as creation He hath made, as God,
With the last judgment but one period,
His imitating spouse would join in one
Manhood’s extremes; He shall come, He is gone;
Or as though one blood drop, which thence did fall,
Accepted, would have served, He yet shed all,
So though the least of His pains, deeds, or words,
Would busy a life, she all this day affords.
This treasure then, in gross, my soul, uplay,
And in my life retail it every day.

GOOD-FRIDAY, 1613, RIDING WESTWARD.

LET man’s soul be a sphere, and then, in this,
Th’ intelligence that moves, devotion is;
And as the other spheres, by being grown
Subject to foreign motion, lose their own,
And being by others hurried every day,
Scarce in a year their natural form obey;
Pleasure or business, so, our souls admit
For their first mover, and are whirl’d by it.
Hence is’t, that I am carried towards the west,
This day, when my soul’s form bends to the East.
There I should see a Sun by rising set,
And by that setting endless day beget.
But that Christ on His cross did rise and fall,
Sin had eternally benighted all.
Yet dare I almost be glad, I do not see
That spectacle of too much weight for me.
Who sees Gods face, that is self-life, must die;
What a death were it then to see God die?
It made His own lieutenant, Nature, shrink,
It made His footstool crack, and the sun wink.
Could I behold those hands, which span the poles
And tune all spheres at once, pierced with those holes?
Could I behold that endless height, which is
Zenith to us and our antipodes,
Humbled below us? or that blood, which is
The seat of all our soul’s, if not of His,
Made dirt of dust, or that flesh which was worn
By God for His apparel, ragg’d and torn?
If on these things I durst not look, durst I
On His distressed Mother cast mine eye,
Who was God’s partner here, and furnish’d thus
Half of that sacrifice which ransom’d us?
Though these things as I ride be from mine eye,
They’re present yet unto my memory,

For that looks towards them; and Thou look’st towards me,
O Saviour, as Thou hang’st upon the tree.
I turn my back to thee but to receive
Corrections till Thy mercies bid Thee leave.
O think me worth Thine anger, punish me,
Burn off my rust, and my deformity;
Restore Thine image, so much, by Thy grace,
That Thou mayst know me, and I’ll turn my face.

A LITANY.

I.

THE FATHER.

FATHER of Heaven, and Him, by whom
It, and us for it, and all else for us,
Thou madest, and govern’st ever, come
And re-create me, now grown ruinous:
My heart is by dejection, clay,
And by self-murder, red.
From this red earth, O Father, purge away
All vicious tinctures, that new-fashioned
I may rise up from death, before I’m dead.

II.

THE SON.

O Son of God, who, seeing two things,
Sin and Death, crept in, which were never made,
By bearing one, tried’st with what stings
The other could Thine heritage invade;
O be Thou nail’d unto my heart,
And crucified again;
Part not from it, though it from Thee would part,
But let it be by applying so Thy pain,
Drown’d in Thy blood, and in Thy passion slain.

III.

THE HOLY GHOST.

O Holy Ghost, whose temple I
Am, but of mud walls , and condensèd dust,
And being sacrilegiously

Half wasted with youth’s fires of pride and lust,
Must with new storms be weather-beat,
Double in my heart Thy flame,
Which let devout sad tears intend, and let —
Though this glass lanthorn, flesh, do suffer maim —
Fire, sacrifice, priest, altar be the same.

IV.

THE TRINITY.

O blessed glorious Trinity,
Bones to philosophy, but milk to faith,
Which, as wise serpents, diversely
Most slipperiness, yet most entanglings hath,
As you distinguish’d, undistinct,
By power, love, knowledge be,
Give me a such self different instinct,
Of these let all me elemented be,
Of power, to love, to know you unnumbered three.

V.

THE VIRGIN MARY.

For that fair blessed mother-maid,
Whose flesh redeem’d us, that she-cherubin,
Which unlock’d paradise, and made
One claim for innocence, and disseizèd sin,
Whose womb was a strange heaven, for there
God clothed Himself, and grew,
Our zealous thanks we pour. As her deeds were
Our helps, so are her prayers; nor can she sue
In vain, who hath such titles unto you.

VI.

THE ANGELS.

And since this life our nonage is,
And we in wardship to Thine angels be,
Native in heaven's fair palaces
Where we shall be but denizen'd by Thee;
As th' earth conceiving by the sun,
Yields fair diversity,
Yet never knows what course that light doth run;
So let me study that mine actions be
Worthy their sight, though blind in how they see.

VII.

THE PATRIARCHS.

And let Thy patriarchs' desire,
— Those great grandfathers of Thy Church, which saw
More in the cloud than we in fire,
Whom nature clear'd more, than us grace and law,
And now in heaven still pray, that we
May use our new helps right —
Be satisfied, and fructify in me;
Let not my mind be blinder by more light,
Nor faith by reason added lose her sight.

VIII.

THE PROPHETS.

Thy eagle-sighted prophets too,
— Which were Thy Church's organs, and did sound
That harmony which made of two
One law, and did unite, but not confound;
Those heavenly poets which did see
Thy will, and it express
In rhythmic feet — in common pray for me,
That I by them excuse not my excess
In seeking secrets, or poeticness.

IX.

THE APOSTLES.

And thy illustrious zodiac
Of twelve apostles, which engirt this All,
— From whom whosoever do not take
Their light, to dark deep pits throw down and fall; —
As through their prayers Thou’st let me know
That their books are divine,
May they pray still, and be heard, that I go
Th’ old broad way in applying; O decline
Me, when my comment would make Thy word mine.

X.

THE MARTYRS.

And since Thou so desirously
Didst long to die, that long before Thou couldst,
And long since Thou no more couldst die,
Thou in thy scatter’d mystic body wouldst
In Abel die, and ever since
In Thine; let their blood come
To beg for us a discreet patience
Of death, or of worse life; for O, to some
Not to be martyrs, is a martyrdom.

XI.

THE CONFESSORS.

Therefore with Thee triumpheth there
A virgin squadron of white confessors,
Whose bloods betroth’d not married were,
Tender’d, not taken by those ravishers.
They know, and pray that we may know,
In every Christian

Hourly tempestuous persecutions grow;
Temptations martyr us alive; a man
Is to himself a Diocletian.

XII.

THE VIRGINS.

The cold white snowy nunnery,
Which, as Thy Mother, their high abbess, sent
Their bodies back again to Thee,
As Thou hadst lent them, clean and innocent;
Though they have not obtain'd of Thee,
That or Thy Church or I
Should keep, as they, our first integrity,
Divorce Thou sin in us, or bid it die,
And call chaste widowhead virginity.

XIII.

THE DOCTORS.

The sacred academy above
Of Doctors, whose pains have unclasp'd, and taught
Both books of life to us — for love
To know Thy scriptures tells us, we are wrote
In Thy other book — pray for us there,
That what they have misdone
Or missaid, we to that may not adhere.
Their zeal may be our sin. Lord, let us run
Mean ways, and call them stars, but not the sun.

XIV.

And whilst this universal quire,
That Church in triumph, this in warfare here,
Warm'd with one all-partaking fire
Of love, that none be lost, which cost Thee dear,

Prays ceaselessly, and Thou hearken too
— Since to be gracious
Our task is treble, to pray, bear, and do —
Hear this prayer, Lord; O Lord, deliver us
From trusting in those prayers, though pour'd out
thus.

XV.

From being anxious, or secure,
Dead clods of sadness, or light squibs of mirth,
From thinking that great courts immure
All, or no happiness, or that this earth
Is only for our prison framed,
Or that Thou'rt covetous
To them whom Thou lovest, or that they are maim'd
From reaching this world's sweet who seek Thee
thus,
With all their might, good Lord, deliver us.

XVI.

From needing danger, to be good,
From owing Thee yesterday's tears to-day,
From trusting so much to Thy blood
That in that hope we wound our soul away,
From bribing Thee with alms, to excuse
Some sin more burdenous,
From light affecting, in religion, news,
From thinking us all soul, neglecting thus
Our mutual duties, Lord, deliver us.

XVII.

From tempting Satan to tempt us,
By our connivance, or slack company,
From measuring ill by vicious
Neglecting to choke sin's spawn, vanity,

From indiscreet humility,
Which might be scandalous
And cast reproach on Christianity,
From being spies, or to spies pervious,
From thirst or scorn of fame, deliver us.

XVIII.

Deliver us through Thy descent
Into the Virgin, whose womb was a place
Of middle kind; and Thou being sent
To ungracious us, stay'dst at her full of grace;
And through Thy poor birth, where first Thou
Glorified'st poverty;
And yet soon after riches didst allow,
By accepting kings' gifts in th' Epiphany;
Deliver us, and make us to both ways free.

XIX.

And through that bitter agony,
Which is still th' agony of pious wits,
Disputing what distorted Thee,
And interrupted evenness with fits;
And through Thy free confession,
Though thereby they were then
Made blind, so that Thou mightst from them have gone;
Good Lord, deliver us, and teach us when
We may not, and we may, blind unjust men.

XX.

Through Thy submitting all, to blows
Thy face, Thy robes to spoil, Thy fame to scorn,
All ways, which rage, or justice knows,
And by which Thou couldst show that Thou wast born;
And through Thy gallant humbleness
Which Thou in death didst show,

Dying before Thy soul they could express;
Deliver us from death, by dying so
To this world, ere this world do bid us go.

XXI.

When senses, which Thy soldiers are,
We arm against Thee, and they fight for sin;
When want, sent but to tame, doth war,
And work despair a breach to enter in;
When plenty, God's image, and seal,
Makes us idolatrous,
And love it, not him, whom it should reveal;
When we are moved to seem religious
Only to vent wit; Lord, deliver us.

XXII.

In churches, when th' infirmity
Of him which speaks, diminishes the word;
When magistrates do misapply
To us, as we judge, lay or ghostly sword;
When plague, which is Thine angel, reigns,
Or wars, Thy champions, sway;
When heresy, Thy second deluge, gains;
In th' hour of death, th' eve of last Judgment day;
Deliver us from the sinister way.

XXIII.

Hear us, O hear us, Lord; to Thee
A sinner is more music, when he prays,
Than spheres' or angels' praises be,
In panegyric alleluias;
Hear us, for till Thou hear us, Lord,
We know not what to say;
Thine ear to our sighs, tears, thoughts, gives voice and word;

O Thou, who Satan heard’st in Job’s sick day,
Hear Thyself now, for Thou in us dost pray.

XXIV.

That we may change to evenness
This intermitting aguish piety;
That snatching cramps of wickedness
And apoplexies of fast sin may die;
That music of Thy promises,
Not threats in thunder may
Awaken us to our just offices;
What in Thy book Thou dost, or creatures say,
That we may hear, Lord, hear us when we pray.

XXV.

That our ears’ sickness we may cure,
And rectify those labyrinths aright,
That we by heark’ning not procure
Our praise, nor others’ dispraise so invite;
That we get not a slipp’riness
And senselessly decline,
From hearing bold wits jest at kings’ excess,
To admit the like of majesty divine;
That we may lock our ears, Lord, open Thine.

XXVI.

That living law, the magistrate,
Which to give us, and make us physic, doth
Our vices often aggravate;
That preachers taxing sin, before her growth;
That Satan, and envenom’d men —
Which will, if we starve, dine —
When they do most accuse us, may see then
Us to amendment hear them, Thee decline;
That we may open our ears, Lord, lock Thine.

XXVII.

That learning, Thine ambassador,
From Thine allegiance we never tempt;
That beauty, paradise's flower
For physic made, from poison be exempt;
That wit — born apt high good to do —
By dwelling lazily
On nature's nothing be not nothing too;
That our affections kill us not, nor die;
Hear us, weak echoes, O, Thou Ear and Eye.

XXVIII.

Son of God, hear us, and since Thou
By taking our blood, owest it us again,
Gain to Thyself, or us allow;
And let not both us and Thyself be slain;
O Lamb of God, which took'st our sin,
Which could not stick to Thee,
O let it not return to us again;
But patient and physician being free,
As sin is nothing, let it nowhere be.

UPON THE TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS BY SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, AND THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE, HIS SISTER.

ETERNAL God — for whom who ever dare
Seek new expressions, do the circle square,
And thrust into straight corners of poor wit
Thee, who art cornerless and infinite —
I would but bless Thy name, not name Thee now
— And Thy gifts are as infinite as Thou —
Fix we our praises therefore on this one,
That, as thy blessed Spirit fell upon
These Psalms' first author in a cloven tongue
— For 'twas a double power by which he sung
The highest matter in the noblest form —
So thou hast cleft that Spirit, to perform
That work again, and shed it here, upon
Two, by their bloods, and by Thy Spirit one;
A brother and a sister, made by Thee
The organ, where Thou art the harmony.
Two that make one John Baptist's holy voice,
And who that Psalm, "Now let the Isles rejoice,"
Have both translated, and applied it too,
Both told us what, and taught us how to do.
They show us islanders our Joy, our King;
They tell us why, and teach us how to sing.
Make all this all three choirs, heaven, earth, and spheres;
The first, Heaven, hath a song, but no man hears;
The spheres have music, but they have no tongue,
Their harmony is rather danced than sung;
But our third choir, to which the first gives ear
— For Angels learn by what the Church does here —
This choir hath all. The organist is he
Who hath tuned God and man, the organ we;
The songs are these, which heaven's high holy Muse
Whisper'd to David, David to the Jews;

And David’s successors in holy zeal,
In forms of joy and art do re-reveal
To us so sweetly and sincerely too,
That I must not rejoice as I would do,
When I behold that these Psalms are become
So well attired abroad, so ill at home,
So well in chambers, in Thy Church so ill,
As I can scarce call that reform’d until
This be reform’d; would a whole state present
A lesser gift than some one man hath sent?
And shall our Church unto our Spouse and King
More hoarse, more harsh than any other, sing?
For that we pray, we praise Thy name for this,
Which, by this Moses and this Miriam, is
Already done; and as those Psalms we call,
— Though some have other authors — David’s all,
So though some have, some may some Psalms translate,
We Thy Sidneian psalms shall celebrate,
And, till we come th’ extemporal song to sing
— Learn’d the first hour that we see the King,
Who hath translated those translators — may
These their sweet learned labours all the way
Be as our tuning, that when hence we part,
We may fall in with them, and sing our part!

ODE: VENGEANCE WILL SIT ABOVE OUR FAULTS

I. VENGEANCE will sit above our faults; but till
She there do sit,
We see her not, nor them. Thus blind, yet still
We lead her way; and thus, whilst we do ill,
We suffer it.

2. Unhappy he whom youth makes not beware
Of doing ill.
Enough we labour under age, and care;
In number, th' errors of the last place are
The greatest still.

3. Yet we, that should the ill we now begin
As soon repent,
Strange thing! perceive not; our faults are not seen,
But past us; neither felt, but only in
The punishment.

4. But we know ourselves least; mere outward shows
Our minds so store,
That our souls no more than our eyes disclose
But form and colour. Only he who knows
Himself, knows more.

TO MR. TILMAN AFTER HE HAD TAKEN ORDERS.

THOU, whose diviner soul hath caused thee now
To put thy hand unto the holy plough,
Making lay-scornings of the ministry
Not an impediment, but victory;
What bring'st thou home with thee? how is thy mind
Affected since the vintage? Dost thou find
New thoughts and stirrings in thee? and, as steel
Touch'd with a loadstone, dost new motions feel?
Or, as a ship after much pain and care
For iron and cloth brings home rich Indian ware,
Hast thou thus traffick'd, but with far more gain
Of noble goods, and with less time and pain?
Thou art the same materials, as before,
Only the stamp is changèd, but no more.
And as new crowned kings alter the face,
But not the money's substance, so hath grace
Changed only God's old image by creation,
To Christ's new stamp, at this thy coronation;
Or, as we paint angels with wings, because
They bear God's message and proclaim His laws,
Since thou must do the like and so must move,
Art thou new feather'd with celestial love?
Dear, tell me where thy purchase lies, and show
What thy advantage is above, below.
But if thy gainings do surmount expression,
Why doth the foolish world scorn that profession,
Whose joys pass speech? Why do they think unfit
That gentry should join families with it?
As if their day were only to be spent
In dressing, mistressing and compliment.
Alas! poor joys, but poorer men, whose trust
Seems richly placèd in sublimèd dust,
— For such are clothes and beauty, which though gay,
Are, at the best, but of sublimèd clay —

Let then the world thy calling disrespect,
But go thou on, and pity their neglect.
What function is so noble, as to be
Ambassador to God, and destiny?
To open life? to give kingdoms to more
Than kings give dignities? to keep heaven's door?
Mary's prerogative was to bear Christ, so
'Tis preachers' to convey Him, for they do,
As angels out of clouds, from pulpits speak;
And bless the poor beneath, the lame, the weak.
If then th' astronomers, whereas they spy
A new-found star, their optics magnify,
How brave are those, who with their engine can
Bring man to heaven, and heaven again to man?
These are thy titles and pre-eminences,
In whom must meet God's graces, men's offences;
And so the heavens which beget all things here,
And the earth, our mother, which these things doth bear;
Both these in thee, are in thy calling knit
And make thee now a blest hermaphrodite.

A HYMN TO CHRIST, AT THE AUTHOR'S LAST GOING INTO GERMANY.

IN what torn ship so ever I embark,
That ship shall be my emblem of Thy ark;
What sea soever swallow me, that flood
Shall be to me an emblem of Thy blood;
Though Thou with clouds of anger do disguise
Thy face, yet through that mask I know those eyes,
Which, though they turn away sometimes,
They never will despise.

I sacrifice this island unto Thee,
And all whom I love there, and who loved me;
When I have put our seas 'twixt them and me,
Put thou Thy seas betwixt my sins and Thee.
As the tree's sap doth seek the root below
In winter, in my winter now I go,
Where none but Thee, the eternal root
Of true love, I may know.

Nor Thou nor Thy religion dost control
The amorousness of an harmonious soul;
But Thou wouldst have that love Thyself; as Thou
Art jealous, Lord, so I am jealous now;
Thou lovest not, till from loving more Thou free
My soul; Who ever gives, takes liberty;
Oh, if Thou carest not whom I love,
Alas! Thou lovest not me.

Seal then this bill of my divorce to all,
On whom those fainter beams of love did fall;
Marry those loves, which in youth scatter'd be
On fame, wit, hopes — false mistresses — to Thee.
Churches are best for prayer, that have least light;
To see God only, I go out of sight;

And to escape stormy days, I choose
An everlasting night.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMY, FOR THE MOST PART ACCORDING TO TREMELLIUS.

CHAP. I.

I. HOW sits this city, late most populous,
Thus solitary, and like a widow thus?
Amplest of nations, queen of provinces
She was, who now thus tributary is?

2. Still in the night she weeps, and her tears fall
Down by her cheeks along, and none of all
Her lovers comfort her; perfidiously
Her friends have dealt, and now are enemy.

3. Unto great bondage, and afflictions,
Judah is captive led; those nations
With whom she dwells, no place of rest afford;
In straits she meets her persecutors' sword.

4. Empty are the gates of Sion, and her ways
Mourn, because none come to her solemn days.
Her priests do groan, her maids are comfortless;
And she's unto herself a bitterness.

5. Her foes are grown her head, and live at peace,
Because, when her transgressions did increase,
The Lord strook her with sadness; the enemy
Doth drive her children to captivity.

6. From Sion's daughter is all beauty gone;
Like harts which seek for pasture, and find none,
Her princes are; and now before the foe
Which still pursues them, without strength they go.

7. Now in their days of tears, Jerusalem
— Her men slain by the foe, none succouring them —
Remembers what of old she esteemed most,
Whiles her foes laugh at her, for what she hath lost.

8. Jerusalem hath sinn’d, therefore is she
Removed, as women in uncleanness be;
Who honour’d, scorn her, for her foulness they
Have seen; herself doth groan, and turn away.

9. Her foulness in her skirts was seen, yet she
Remember’d not her end; miraculously
Therefore she fell, none comforting; behold,
O Lord, my affliction, for the foe grows bold.

10. Upon all things where her delight hath been,
The foe hath stretch’d his hand, for she hath seen
Heathen, whom thou command’st, should not do so,
Into her holy sanctuary go.

11. And all her people groan, and seek for bread;
And they have given, only to be fed,
All precious things, wherein their pleasure lay;
How cheap I’m grown, O Lord, behold, and weigh.

12. All this concerns not you, who pass by me;
O see, and mark if any sorrow be
Like to my sorrow, which Jehovah hath
Done to me in the day of His fierce wrath?

13. That fire, which by Himself is governed
He hath cast from heaven on my bones, and spread
A net before my feet, and me o’erthrown,
And made me languish all the day alone.

14. His hand hath of my sins framèd a yoke
Which wreathed, and cast upon my neck, hath broke

My strength; the Lord unto those enemies
Hath given me, from whom I cannot rise.

15. He under foot hath trodden in my sight
My strong men; He did company accite
To break my young men; He the winepress hath
Trod upon Judah's daughter in His wrath.

16. For these things do I weep; mine eye, mine eye
Casts water out; for He which should be nigh
To comfort me, is now departed far;
The foe prevails, forlorn my children are.

17. There's none, though Sion do stretch out her hand,
To comfort her; it is the Lord's command
That Jacob's foes girt him; Jerusalem
Is as an unclean woman amongst them.

18. But yet the Lord is just, and righteous still;
I have rebell'd against His holy will;
O hear all people, and my sorrow see,
My maids, my young men in captivity.

19. I called for my lovers then, but they
Deceived me, and my priests, and elders lay
Dead in the city; for they sought for meat
Which should refresh their souls, and none could get.

20. Because I am in straits, Jehovah, see!
My heart o'erturn'd, my bowels muddy be;
Because I have rebell'd so much, as fast
The sword without, as death within, doth waste.

21. Of all which here I mourn, none comforts me;
My foes have heard my grief, and glad they be,
That Thou hast done it; but Thy promised day
Will come, when, as I suffer, so shall they.

22. Let all their wickedness appear to Thee;
Do unto them, as Thou hast done to me,
For all my sins; the sighs which I have had
Are very many, and my heart is sad.

CHAP. II.

I. HOW over Sion's daughter hath God hung
His wrath's thick cloud? and from heaven hath flung
To earth the beauty of Israel, and hath
Forgot His foot-stool in the day of wrath?

2. The Lord unsparingly hath swallowed
All Jacob's dwellings, and demolished
To ground the strengths of Judah, and profaned
The Princes of the kingdom, and the land.

3. In heat of wrath, the horn of Israel He
Hath clean cut off, and lest the enemy
Be hinder'd, His right hand He doth retire,
But is towards Jacob all-devouring fire.

4. Like to an enemy He bent His bow;
His right hand was in posture of a foe,
To kill what Sion's daughter did desire,
'Gainst whom His wrath He poured forth like fire.

5. For like an enemy Jehovah is,
Devouring Israel, and his palaces,
Destroying holds, giving additions
To Judah's daughters' lamentations.

6. Like to a garden hedge He hath cast down
The place where was His congregation,
And Sion's feasts and sabbaths are forgot;
Her King, her Priest, His wrath regardeth not.

7. The Lord forsakes His altar, and detests
   His sanctuary, and in the foes' hands rests
   His palace, and the walls, in which their cries
   Are heard, as in the true solemnities.

8. The Lord hath cast a line, so to confound
   And level Sion's walls unto the ground;
   He draws not back His hand, which doth o'erturn
   The wall, and rampart, which together mourn.

9. Their gates are sunk into the ground, and He
   Hath broke the bar; their king and princes be
   Amongst the heathen, without law, nor there
   Unto their prophets doth the Lord appear.

10. There Sion's Elders on the ground are placed,
    And silence keep; dust on their heads they cast;
    In sackcloth have they girt themselves, and low
    The virgins towards ground their heads do throw.

11. My bowels are grown muddy, and mine eyes
    Are faint with weeping; and my liver lies
    Pour'd out upon the ground, for misery
    That sucking children in the streets do die.

12. When they had cryed unto their mothers, "Where
    Shall we have bread, and drink?" they fainted there,
    And in the streets like wounded persons lay,
    Till 'twixt their mothers' breasts they went away.

13. Daughter Jerusalem, O what may be
    A witness, or comparison for thee?
    Sion, to ease thee, what shall I name like thee?
    Thy breach is like the sea; what help can be?

14. For thee vain foolish things thy prophets sought;
    Thee, thine iniquities they have not taught,

Which might disturb thy bondage; but for thee
False burthens, and false causes they would see.

15. The passengers do clap their hands, and hiss
And wag their head at thee, and say, “Is this
That city, which so many men did call
Joy of the earth, and perfectest of all?”

16. Thy foes do gape upon thee, and they hiss,
And gnash their teeth, and say, “Devour we this,
For this is certainly the day which we
Expected, and which now we find, and see.”

17. The Lord hath done that which He purposèd;
Fulfill’d His word of old determinèd;
He hath thrown down, and not spared, and thy foe
Made glad above thee, and advanced him so.

18. But now their hearts unto the Lord do call;
Therefore, O walls of Sion, let tears fall
Down like a river, day and night; take thee
No rest, but let thine eye incessant be.

19. Arise, cry in the night, pour out thy sins,
Thy heart, like water, when the watch begins;
Lift up thy hands to God, lest children die,
Which, faint for hunger, in the streets do lie.

20. Behold, O Lord, consider unto whom
Thou hast done this; what, shall the women come
To eat their children of a span? shall Thy
Prophet and priest be slain in sanctuary?

21. On ground in streets the young and old do lie;
My virgins and young men by sword do die;
Them in the day of Thy wrath Thou hast slain;
Nothing did Thee from killing them contain.

22. As to a solemn feast, all whom I fear'd
Thou call'st about me; when Thy wrath appear'd,
None did remain or scape, for those which I
Brought up, did perish by mine enemy.

CHAP. III.

1. I AM the man which have affliction seen,
Under the rod of God's wrath having been;
2. He hath led me to darkness, not to light,
3. And against me all day, His hand doth fight.

4. He hath broke my bones, worn out my flesh and skin,
5. Built up against me; and hath girt me in
With hemlock, and with labour; 6. And set me
In dark, as they who dead for ever be.

7. He hath hedged me lest I 'scape, and added more
To my steel fetters heavier than before.
8. When I cry out He outshuts my prayer; 9. And hath
Stopp'd with hewn stone my way, and turn'd my path.

10. And like a lion hid in secrecy,
Or bear which lies in wait, He was to me.
11. He stops my way, tears me, made desolate;
12. And He makes me the mark He shooteth at.

13. He made the children of His quiver pass
Into my reins. 14. I, with my people, was
All the day long, a song and mockery.
15. He hath fill'd me with bitterness, and He

Hath made me drunk with wormwood. 16. He hath burst
My teeth with stones, and cover'd me with dust.
17. And thus my soul far off from peace was set,
And my prosperity I did forget.

18. My strength, my hope — unto myself I said —
    Which from the Lord should come, is perished;
19. But when my mournings I do think upon,
    My wormwood, hemlock, and affliction,

20. My soul is humbled in rememb'ring this;
21. My heart considers, therefore, hope there is.
22. 'Tis God's great mercy we're not utterly
    Consumed, for His compassions do not die;

23. For every morning they renewed be,
    For great, O Lord, is Thy fidelity.
24. The Lord is — saith my soul — my portion,
    And therefore in Him will I hope alone.

25. The Lord is good to them, who on Him rely,
    And to the soul that seeks Him earnestly.
26. It is both good to trust, and to attend
    The Lord's salvation unto the end.

27. 'Tis good for one His yoke in youth to bear.
28. He sits alone, and doth all speech forbear,
    Because he hath borne it. 29. And his mouth he lays
    Deep in the dust, yet then in hope he stays.

30. He gives his cheeks to whosoever will
    Strike him, and so he is reproached still.
31. For not for ever doth the Lord forsake;
32. But when He hath struck with sadness, He doth take

    Compassion, as His mercy's infinite;
33. Nor is it with His heart, that He doth smite,
34. That underfoot the prisoners stamped be,
35. That a man's right the judge himself doth see

    To be wrung from him; 36. That he subverted is
    In his just cause, the Lord allows not this.

37. Who then will say, that aught doth come to pass,
But that which by the Lord commanded was?

38. Both good and evil from His mouth proceeds;
39. Why then grieves any man for his misdeeds?
40. Turn we to God, by trying out our ways;
41. To Him in heav'n our hands with hearts upraise.

42. We have rebell'd, and fallen away from Thee;
Thou pardon'st not; 43. Usest no clemency;
Pursuest us, kill'st us, cover'st us with wrath;
44. Cover'st Thyself with clouds, that our prayer hath

No power to pass. 45. And Thou hast made us fall
As refuse, and off-scouring to them all.
46. All our foes gape at us. 47. Fear and a snare
With ruin, and with waste upon us are.

48. With watery rivers doth mine eye o'erflow
For ruin of my people's daughters so;
49. Mine eye doth drop down tears incessantly,
50. Until the Lord look down from heav'n to see.

51. And for my city daughters' sake, mine eye
Doth break mine heart. 52. Causeless mine enemy
Like a bird chased me. 53. In a dungeon
They've shut my life, and cast on me a stone.

54. Waters flow'd o'er my head; then thought I, I am
Destroy'd; 55. I called, Lord, upon Thy name
Out of the pit; 56. And Thou my voice didst hear;
O from my sigh and cry, stop not Thine ear.

57. Then when I call'd upon Thee, Thou drew'st near
Unto me, and said'st unto me, "Do not fear."
58. Thou, Lord, my soul's cause handled hast, and Thou
Rescuest my life. 59. O Lord, do Thou judge now.

Thou heardst my wrong, 60. Their vengeance, all they've wrought;
61. How they reproach'd, Thou'st heard, and what they thought;
62. What their lips utter'd, which against me rose,
And what was ever whisper'd by my foes.

63. I am their song, whether they rise or sit;
64. Give them rewards, Lord, for their working fit,
65. Sorrow of heart, Thy curse; 66. And with Thy might
Follow, and from under heaven destroy them quite.

CHAP. IV.

1. HOW is the gold become so dim? How is
Purest and finest gold thus changed to this?
The stones which were stones of the sanctuary,
Scatter'd in corners of each street do lie.

2. The precious sons of Sion, which should be
Valued at purest gold, how do we see
Low rated now, as earthen pitchers, stand,
Which are the work of a poor potter's hand?

3. Even the sea-calfs draw their breasts, and give
Suck to their young; my people's daughters live,
By reason of the foes' great cruelness,
As do the owls in the vast wilderness.

4. And when the sucking child doth strive to draw,
His tongue for thirst cleaves to his upper jaw;
And when for bread the children cry,
There is no man that doth them satisfy.

5. They which before were delicately fed,
Now in the streets forlorn have perished;
And they which ever were in scarlet clothed,
Sit and embrace the dunghills which they loathed.

6. The daughters of my people have sinn’d more,
   Than did the town of Sodom sin before;
   Which being at once destroy’d, there did remain
   No hands amongst them to vex them again.

7. But heretofore, purer her Nazarite
   Was than the snow, and milk was not so white;
   As carbuncles did their pure bodies shine,
   And all their polish’dness was sapphirine.

8. They’re darker now than blackness; none can know
   Them by the face, as through the street they go;
   For now their skin doth cleave unto their bone,
   And withered, is like to dry wood grown.

9. Better by sword than famine ‘tis to die;
   And better through-pierced, than through penury.
10. Women, by nature pitiful, have eat
   ‘Their children — dress’d with their own hand — for meat.

11. Jehovah here fully accomplish’d hath
   His indignation, and pour’d forth His wrath;
   Kindled a fire in Sion, which hath power
   To eat, and her foundations to devour.

12. Nor would the kings of th’ earth, nor all which live
   In the inhabitable world believe,
   That any adversary, any foe,
   Into Jerusalem should enter so.

13. For the priests’ sins, and prophets’, which have shed
   Blood in the streets and the just murdered;
14. Which, when those men whom they made blind did stray
   Thorough the streets, defilèd by the way

   With blood, the which impossible it was
   Their garment should ‘scape touching, as they pass,

15. Would cry aloud, “Depart, defilèd men,
Depart, depart, and touch not us!” and then

They fled, and stray’d, and with the Gentiles were;
Yet told their friends, they should not long dwell there.
16. For this they’re scatter’d by Jehovah’s face
Who never will regard them more; no grace

Unto their old men shall the foe afford;
Nor, that they’re priests, redeem them from the sword.
17. And we as yet, for all these miseries
Desiring our vain help, consume our eyes.

And such a nation as cannot save,
We in desire and speculation have;
18. They hunt our steps, that in the streets we fear
To go; our end is now approached near.

Our days accomplish’d are; this the last day;
Eagles of heav’n are not so swift as they
19. Which follow us; o’er mountain tops they fly
At us, and for us in the desert lie.

20. Th’ Anointed Lord, breath of our nostrils, He
Of whom we said, under His shadow we
Shall with more ease under the heathen dwell,
Into the pit which these men digged, fell.

21. Rejoice, O Edom’s daughter, joyful be
Thou that inhabit’st Uz, for unto thee
This cup shall pass, and thou with drunkenness
Shalt fill thyself, and show thy nakedness.

22. Then thy sins, O Sion, shall be spent,
The Lord will not leave thee in banishment.
Thy sins, O Edom’s daughter, He will see,
And for them, pay thee with captivity.

CHAP. V.

1. Remember, O Lord, what is fall’n on us;
   See, and mark how we are reproached thus;
2. For unto strangers our possession
   Is turn’d, our houses unto aliens gone.

3. Our mothers are become as widows; we
   As orphans all, and without fathers be;
4. Waters which are our own, we drink and pay;
   And upon our own wood a price they lay.

5. Our persecutors on our necks do sit;
   They make us travail, and not intermit;
6. We stretch our hands unto th’ Egyptians
   To get us bread; and to th’ Assyrians.

7. Our fathers did these sins, and are no more;
   But we do bear the sins they did before.
8. They are but servants, which do rule us thus,
   Yet from their hands none would deliver us.

9. With danger of our life our bread we gat;
   For in the wilderness the sword did wait.
10. The tempests of this famine we lived in,
    Black as an oven colour’d had our skin.

11. In Judah’s cities they the maids abused
    By force, and so women in Sion used.
12. The princes with their hands they hung; no grace
    Nor honour gave they to the elder’s face.

13. Unto the mill our young men carried are,
    And children fell under the wood they bare.
14. Elders the gates, youth did their songs forbear;
    Gone was our joy; our dancings, mournings were.

15. Now is the crown fall’n from our head; and woe
    Be unto us, because we’ve sinnèd so.
16. For this our hearts do languish, and for this
    Over our eyes a cloudy dimness is.

17. Because Mount Sion desolate doth lie,
    And foxes there do go at liberty;
18. But Thou, O Lord, art ever, and Thy throne
    From generation to generation.

19. Why shouldst Thou forget us eternally?
    Or leave us thus long in this misery?
20. Restore us, Lord, to thee, that so we may
    Return, and as of old, renew our day.

21. For oughtest Thou, O Lord, despise us thus,
    And to be utterly enraged at us?

HYMN TO GOD, MY GOD, IN MY SICKNESS.

SINCE I am coming to that Holy room,
   Where, with Thy choir of saints for evermore,
I shall be made Thy music; as I come
   I tune the instrument here at the door,
   And what I must do then, think here before;

Whilst my physicians by their love are grown
   Cosmographers, and I their map, who lie
Flat on this bed, that by them may be shown
   That this is my south-west discovery,
   Per fretum febris, by these straits to die;

I joy, that in these straits I see my west;
   For, though those currents yield return to none,
What shall my west hurt me? As west and east
   In all flat maps — and I am one — are one,
   So death doth touch the resurrection.

Is the Pacific sea my home? Or are
   The eastern riches? Is Jerusalem?
Anyan, and Magellan, and Gibraltar?
   All straits, and none but straits, are ways to them
   Whether where Japhet dwelt, or Cham, or Shem.

We think that Paradise and Calvary,
   Christ's cross and Adam's tree, stood in one place;
Look, Lord, and find both Adams met in me;
   As the first Adam's sweat surrounds my face,
   May the last Adam's blood my soul embrace.

So, in His purple wrapp'd, receive me, Lord;
   By these His thorns, give me His other crown;
And as to others' souls I preach'd Thy word,
   Be this my text, my sermon to mine own,
   "Therefore that He may raise, the Lord throws down."

A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER.

I.

WILT Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin, through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

II.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

III.

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;
And having done that, Thou hast done;
I fear no more.

TO GEORGE HERBERT, SENT HIM WITH ONE OF MY SEALS OF THE ANCHOR AND CHRIST.

QUI prius assuetus serpentum fasce tabellas
Signare, hæc nostræ symbola parva domus,
Adscitus domui Domini, patrioque relicto
Stemmate, nanciscor stemmata jure nova.
Hinc mihi Crux primo quæ fronti impressa lavacro,
Finibus extensis, anchora facta patet.
Anchoræ in effigiem Crux tandem desinit ipsam,
Anchora fit tandem Crux tolerata diu.
Hoc tamen ut fiat, Christo vegetatur ab ipso
Crux, et ab affixo est Anchora facta Jesu.
Nec natalitiis penitus serpentibus orbor,
Non ita dat Deus, ut auferat ante data.
Qua sapiens, dos est, qua terram lambit et ambit,
Pestis, at in nostra sit medicina Cruce
Serpens fixa Cruci si sit natura, Crucique
A fixo nobis gratia tota fluat.
Omnia cum Crux sint, Crux Anchora fixa, sigillum
Non tam dicendum hoc, quam catechismus erit.
Mitto, nec exigua, exigua sub imagine, dona,
Pignora amicitiæ, et munera vota preces.
Plura tibi accumulet sanctus cognominis, Ille
Regia qui flavo dona sigillat equo.

A SHEAF OF SNAKES USED HERETOFORE TO BE MY SEAL, THE CREST OF OUR POOR FAMILY.

ADOPTED in God’s family and so
Our old coat lost, unto new arms I go.
The Cross — my seal at baptism — spread below
Does, by that form, into an Anchor grow.
Crosses grow Anchors; bear, as thou shouldest do
Thy Cross, and that Cross grows an Anchor too.
But He that makes our Crosses Anchors thus,
Is Christ, who there is crucified for us.
Yet may I, with this, my first serpents hold;
God gives new blessings, and yet leaves the old.
The serpent may, as wise, my pattern be;
My poison, as he feeds on dust, that’s me.
And, as he rounds the earth to murder sure,
My death he is, but on the Cross, my cure.
Crucify nature then, and then implore
All grace from Him, crucified there before;
Then all is Cross, and that Cross Anchor grown;
This seal’s a catechism, not a seal alone.
Under that little seal great gifts I send,
Works, and prayers, pawns, and fruits of a friend.
And may that saint which rides in our great seal,
To you who bear his name,* great bounties deal!

TRANSLATED OUT OF GAZÆUS, “VOTA AMICO FACTA,” FOL. 160.

GOD grant thee thine own wish, and grant thee mine,
Thou who dost, best friend, in best things outshine;
May thy soul, ever cheerful, ne’er know cares,
Nor thy life, ever lively, know grey hairs,
Nor thy hand, ever open, know base holds,
Nor thy purse, ever plump, know pleats, or folds,
Nor thy tongue, ever true, know a false thing,
Nor thy words, ever mild, know quarrelling,
Nor thy works, ever equal, know disguise,
Nor thy fame, ever pure, know contumelies,
Nor thy prayers know low objects, still divine;
God grant thee thine own wish, and grant thee mine.

SATIRES

Donne's satires deal with common Elizabethan topics, including political corruption, the rivalry of fellow poets and lampooning pretentious courtiers. His images of sickness, manure and jealousy evoke a satiric view of a world populated by all the 'knaves of England'. His third satire, however, deals with the problem of true religion, a matter of great importance to the poet. He argues that it was better to examine carefully one's religious convictions than to follow blindly any established tradition.

CONTENTS

AWAY THOU FONDLING MOTLEY HUMORIST
SIR; THOUGH (I THANKE GOD FOR IT) I DO HATE
KIND PITY CHOKES MY SPLEEN; BRAVE SCORN FORBIDS
WELL; I MAY NOW RECEIVE, AND DIE; MY SINN
THOU SHALT NOT LAUGH IN THIS LEAFE, MUSE, NOR THEY
MEN WRITE THAT LOVE AND REASON DISAGREE
TO SIR NICHOLAS SMYTH
UPON MR. THOMAS CORYATS CRUDITIES
IN EUNDEM MACARONICUM

SATYRE I

AWAY THOU FONDLING MOTLEY HUMORIST

Away thou fondling motley humorist,
Leave mee, and in this standing woodden chest,
Consorted with these few bookes, let me lye
In prison, and here be coffin’d, when I dye;
Here are Gods conduits, grave Divines; and here
Natures Secretary, the Philosopher;
And jolly Statesmen, which teach how to tie
The sinewes of a cities mistique bodie;
Here gathering Chroniclers, and by them stand
Giddie fantastique Poets of each land.
Shall I leave all this constant company,
And follow headlong, wild uncertaine thee?
First sweare by thy best love in earnest
(If thou which lov’st all, canst love any best)
Thou wilt not leave mee in the middle street
Though some more spruce companion thou dost meet,
Not though a Captaine do come in thy way
Bright parcell gilt, with forty dead mens pay,
Nor though a briske perfum’d piert Courtier
Deigne with a nod, thy courtesie to answer,
Nor come a velvet Justice with a long
Great traine of blew coats, twelve, or fourteen strong,
Wilt thou grin or fawne on him, or prepare
A speech to court his beautious sonne and heire.
For better or worse take mee, or leave mee:
To take, and leave mee is adultery.
Oh monstrous, superstitious puritan,
Of refin’d manners, yet ceremoniall man,
That when thou meet’st one, with enquiring eyes
Dost search, and like a needy broker prize
The silke, and gold he weares, and to that rate
So high or low, dost raise thy formall hat:

That wilt consort none, untill thou have knowne
What lands hee hath in hope, or of his owne,
As though all thy companions should make thee
Jointures, and marry thy deare company.
Why should'st thou (that dost not onely approve,
But in ranke itchie lust, desire, and love
The nakednesse and barenesse to enjoy,
Of thy plumpe muddy whore, or prostitute boy)
Hate vertue, though shee be naked, and bare?
At birth, and death, our bodies naked are;
And till our Soules be unapparrelled
Of bodies, they from blisse are banished.
Mans first blest state was naked, when by sinne
Hee lost that, yet hee'was cloath'd but in beasts skin,
And in this course attire, which I now weare,
With God, and with the Muses I conferre.
But since thou like a contrite penitent,
Charitably warn'd of thy sinnes, dost repent
These vanities, and giddinesses, loe
I shut my chamber doore, and 'Come, lets goe.'
But sooner may a cheape whore, that hath beene
Worne by as many severall men in sinne,
As are black feathers, or musk-colour hose,
Name her childs right true father, 'mongst all those:
Sooner may one guesse, who shall beare away
Th'Infant of London, Heire to'an India:
And sooner may a gulling weather-Spie
By drawing forth heavens Scheame tell certainly
What fashion'd hats, or ruffles, or suits next yeare
Our subtile-witted antique youths will weare;
Then thou, when thou depart'st from mee, canst show
Whither, why, when, or with whom thou wouldst go.
But how shall I be pardon'd my offence
That thus have sinn'd against my conscience?
Now we are in the street; He first of all
Improvidently proud, creepes to the wall,
And so imprison'd, and hem'd in by mee

Sells for a little state his libertie;
Yet though he cannot skip forth now to greet
Every fine silken painted foole we meet,
He them to him with amorous smiles allures,
And grins, smacks, shrugs, and such an itch endures,
As prentises, or schoole-boyes which doe know
Of some gay sport abroad, yet dare not goe.
And as fidlers stop low'st, at highest sound,
So to the most brave, stoops hee nigh'st the ground.
But to a grave man, he doth move no more
Then the wise politique horse would heretofore,
Or thou O Elephant or Ape wilt doe,
When any names the King of Spaine to you.
Now leaps he upright, joggs me,'and cryes, 'Do'you see
Yonder well favour'd youth?' 'Which?' 'Oh, 'tis hee
That dances so divinely.' 'Oh,' said I,
'Stand still, must you dance here for company?'
Hee droopt, wee went, till one (which did excell
Th'Indians, in drinking his Tobacco well)
Met us; they talk'd; I whisper'd, 'Let us goe,
'T may be you smell him not, truely I doe.'
He heares not mee, but, on the other side
A many-colour'd Peacock having spide,
Leaves him and mee; I for my lost sheep stay;
He followes, overtakes, goes on the way,
Saying, 'Him whom I last left, all repute
For his device, in hansoming a sute,
To judge of lace, pinke, panes, print, cut and plight,
Of all the Court, to have the best conceit.'
'Our dull Comedians want him, let him goe;
But Oh, God strengthen thee, why stoop'st thou so?'
'Why? he hath travail'd.' 'Long?' 'No, but to me'
(Which understand none,) 'he doth seeme to be
Perfect French, and Italian.' I reply'd,
'So is the Poxe.' He answer'd not, but spy'd
More men of sort, of parts, and qualities;
At last his Love he in a windowe spies,

And like light dew exhal’d, he flings from mee
Violently ravish’d to his lechery.
Many were there, he could command no more;
He quarrell’d, fought, bled; and turn’d out of dore
Directly came to mee hanging the head,
And constantly a while must keepe his bed.

SATYRE II

SIR; THOUGH (I THANKE GOD FOR IT) I DO HATE

Sir; though (I thanke God for it) I do hate
Perfectly all this towne, yet there's one state
In all ill things so excellently best,
That hate, towards them, breeds pitty towards the rest.
Though Poetry indeed be such a sinne
As I thinke that brings dearths, and Spaniards in,
Though like the Pestilence and old fashion'd love,
Ridlingly it catch men; and doth remove
Never, till it be sterv'd out; yet their state
Is poore, disarm'd, like Papists, not worth hate.
One,(like a wretch, which at Barre judg'd as dead,
Yet prompts him which stands next, and cannot reade,
And saves his life)gives ideot actors meanes
(Starving himselfe)to live by'his labor'd sceanes;
As in some Organ, Puppits dance above
And bellows pant below, which them do move.
One would move Love by rimes; but witchcrafts charms
Bring not now their old feares, nor their old harmes:
Rammes, and slings now are seely battery,
Pistolets are the best Artillerie.
And they who write to Lords, rewards to get,
Are they not like singers at doores for meat?
And they who write, because all write, have still
That excuse for writing, and for writing ill.
But hee is worst, who (beggarly) doth chaw
Others wits fruits, and in his ravenous maw
Rankly digested, doth those things out-spue,
As his owne things; 'and they are his owne, 'tis true,
For if one eate my meate, though it be knowne
The meate was mine, th'excrement is his owne.
But these do mee no harme, nor they which use
To out-doe Dildoes, and out-usure Jewes;

To’out-drinke the sea, to’out-sweare the Letanie;
Who with sinnes all kindes as familiar bee
As Confessors; and for whose sinfull sake
Schoolemen new tenements in hell must make:
Whose strange sinnes, Canonists could hardly tell
In which Commandements large receit they dwell.
But these punish themselves; the insolence
Of Coscus onely breeds my just offence,
Whom time (which rots all, and makes botches poxe,
And plodding on, must make a calfe an oxe)
Hath made a Lawyer, which was (alas) of late
But a scarce Poet; jollier of this state,
Then are new benefic’d ministers, he throwes
Like nets, or lime-twigs, wheresoere he goes,
His title’of Barrister, on every wench,
And wooes in language of the Pleas, and Bench:
‘A motion, Lady.’ ‘Speake Coscus.’ ‘I’have beene
In love, ever since *tricesimo*’ of the Queene,
Continuall claimes I’have made, injunctions got
To stay my rivals suit, that hee should not
Proceed.’ ‘Spare mee.’ ‘In Hillary terme I went,
You said, If I returne next size in Lent,
I should be in remitter of your grace;
In th’interim my letters should take place
Of affidavits--’: words, words, which would teare
The tender labyrinth of a soft maids eare,
More, more, then ten Sclavonians scolding, more
Then when winds in our ruin’d Abbeyes rore.
When sicke with Poetrie,’and possest with muse
Thou wast, and mad, I hop’d; but men which chuse
Law practise for meere gaine, bold soule, repute
Worse then imbrothel’d strumpets prostitute.
Now like an owlelike watchman, hee must walke
His hand still at a bill, now he must talke
Idly, like prisoners, which whole months will sweare
That onely suretiship hath brought them there,
And to’every suitor lye in every thing,

Like a Kings favorite, yea like a King;
Like a wedge in a blocke, wring to the barre,
Bearing like Asses, and more shameless farre
Then carted whores, lye, to the grave Judge; for
Bastardy'abounds not in Kings titles, nor
Symonie'and Sodomy in Churchmens lives,
As these things do in him; by these he thrives.
Shortly ('as the sea) hee'will compasse all our land;
From Scots, to Wight; from Mount, to Dover strand.
And spying heires melting with luxurie,
Satan will not joy at their sinnes, as hee.
For as a thrifty wench scrapes kitching-stuffe,
And barrelling the droppings, and the snuffe,
Of wasting candles, which in thirty yeare
(Relique-like kept) perchance buyes wedding geare;
Peecemeale he gets lands, and spends as much time
Wringing each Acre, as men pulling prime.
In parchments then, large as his fields, hee drawes
Assurances, bigge, as gloss'd civill lawes,
So huge, that men (in our times forwardnesse)
Are Fathers of the Church for writing lesse.
These hee writes not; nor for these written payes,
Therefore spares no length; as in those first dayes
When Luther was profest, he did desire
Short *Pater nosters*, saying as a Fryer
Each day his beads, but having left those lawes,
Addes to Christs prayer, the Power and glory clause.
But when he sells or changes land, he'impaires
His writings, and (unwatch'd) leaves out, *ses heires*,
As slily'as any Commenter goes by
Hard words, or sense; or in Divinity
As controverters, in vouch'd texts, leave out
Shrewd words, which might against them cleare the doubt.
Where are those spred woods which cloth'd heretofore
Those bought lands? not built, not burnt within dore.
Where's th'old landlords troops, and almes? In great hals
Carthusian fasts, and fulsome Bachanalls

Equally’I hate; meanes blesse; in rich mens homes
I bid kill some beasts, but no Hecatombs,
None starve, none surfet so; But (Oh) we’allow
Good workes as good, but out of fashion now,
Like old rich wardrops; but my words none drawes
Within the vast reach of th’huge statute lawes.

SATIRE III

KIND PITY CHOKES MY SPLEEN; BRAVE SCORN FORBIDS

Kind pity chokes my spleen; brave scorn forbids
Those tears to issue which swell my eyelids;
I must not laugh, nor weep sins and be wise;
Can railing, then, cure these worn maladies?
Is not our mistress, fair Religion,
As worthy of all our souls' devotion
As virtue was in the first blinded age?
Are not heaven's joys as valiant to assuage
Lusts, as earth's honour was to them? Alas,
As we do them in means, shall they surpass
Us in the end? and shall thy father's spirit
Meet blind philosophers in heaven, whose merit
Of strict life may be imputed faith, and hear
Thee, whom he taught so easy ways and near
To follow, damn'd? Oh, if thou dar'st, fear this;
This fear great courage and high valour is.
Dar'st thou aid mutinous Dutch, and dar'st thou lay
Thee in ships' wooden sepulchres, a prey
To leaders' rage, to storms, to shot, to dearth?
Dar'st thou dive seas, and dungeons of the earth?
Hast thou courageous fire to thaw the ice
Of frozen North discoveries? and thrice
Colder than salamanders, like divine
Children in th' oven, fires of Spain and the Line,
Whose countries limbecs to our bodies be,
Canst thou for gain bear? and must every he
Which cries not, "Goddess," to thy mistress, draw
Or eat thy poisonous words? Courage of straw!
O desperate coward, wilt thou seem bold, and
To thy foes and his, who made thee to stand
Sentinel in his world's garrison, thus yield,

And for forbidden wars leave th’ appointed field?
Know thy foes: the foul devil, whom thou
Strivest to please, for hate, not love, would allow
Thee fain his whole realm to be quit; and as
The world’s all parts wither away and pass,
So the world’s self, thy other lov’d foe, is
In her decrepit wane, and thou loving this,
Dost love a wither’d and worn strumpet; last,
Flesh (itself’s death) and joys which flesh can taste,
Thou lovest, and thy fair goodly soul, which doth
Give this flesh power to taste joy, thou dost loathe.
Seek true religion. O where? Mirreus,
Thinking her unhous’d here, and fled from us,
Seeks her at Rome; there, because he doth know
That she was there a thousand years ago,
He loves her rags so, as we here obey
The statecloth where the prince sate yesterday.
Crantz to such brave loves will not be enthrall’d,
But loves her only, who at Geneva is call’d
Religion, plain, simple, sullen, young,
Contemptuous, yet unhandsome; as among
Lecherous humours, there is one that judges
No wenches wholesome, but coarse country drudges.
Graius stays still at home here, and because
Some preachers, vile ambitious bawds, and laws,
Still new like fashions, bid him think that she
Which dwells with us is only perfect, he
Embraceth her whom his godfathers will
Tender to him, being tender, as wards still
Take such wives as their guardians offer, or
Pay values. Careless Phrygius doth abhor
All, because all cannot be good, as one
Knowing some women whores, dares marry none.
Graccus loves all as one, and thinks that so
As women do in divers countries go
In divers habits, yet are still one kind,
So doth, so is Religion; and this blind-

ness too much light breeds; but unmoved, thou
Of force must one, and forc'd, but one allow,
And the right; ask thy father which is she,
Let him ask his; though truth and falsehood be
Near twins, yet truth a little elder is;
Be busy to seek her; believe me this,
He's not of none, nor worst, that seeks the best.
To adore, or scorn an image, or protest,
May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way
To stand inquiring right, is not to stray;
To sleep, or run wrong, is. On a huge hill,
Cragged and steep, Truth stands, and he that will
Reach her, about must and about must go,
And what the hill's suddenness resists, win so.
Yet strive so that before age, death's twilight,
Thy soul rest, for none can work in that night.
To will implies delay, therefore now do;
Hard deeds, the body's pains; hard knowledge too
The mind's endeavours reach, and mysteries
Are like the sun, dazzling, yet plain to all eyes.
Keep the truth which thou hast found; men do not stand
In so ill case, that God hath with his hand
Sign'd kings' blank charters to kill whom they hate;
Nor are they vicars, but hangmen to fate.
Fool and wretch, wilt thou let thy soul be tied
To man's laws, by which she shall not be tried
At the last day? Oh, will it then boot thee
To say a Philip, or a Gregory,
A Harry, or a Martin, taught thee this?
Is not this excuse for mere contraries
Equally strong? Cannot both sides say so?
That thou mayest rightly obey power, her bounds know;
Those past, her nature and name is chang'd; to be
Then humble to her is idolatry.
As streams are, power is; those blest flowers that dwell
At the rough stream's calm head, thrive and do well,
But having left their roots, and themselves given

To the stream’s tyrannous rage, alas, are driven
Through mills, and rocks, and woods, and at last, almost
Consum’d in going, in the sea are lost.
So perish souls, which more choose men’s unjust
Power from God claim’d, than God himself to trust.

SATYRE IV

WELL; I MAY NOW RECEIVE, AND DIE; MY SINN

Well; I may now receive, and die; My sinne
Indeed is great, but I have beene in
A Purgatorie, such as fear'd hell is
A recreation to,'and scant map of this.
My minde, neither with prides itch, nor yet hath been
Poyson'd with love to see, or to bee seene,
I had no suit there, nor new suite to shew,
Yet went to Court; But as Glaze which did goe
To'a Masse in jest, catch'd, was faine to disburse
The hundred markes, which is the Statutes curse,
Before he scapt, So'it pleas'd my destinie
(Guilty'of my sin of going,) to thinke me
As prone to'all ill, and of good as forget-
full, as proud, as lustfull, and as much in debt,
As vaine, as witlesse, and as false as they
Which dwell at Court, for once going that way.
Therefore I suffer'd this; Towards me did runne
A thing more strange, then on Niles slime, the Sunne
E'r bred; or all which into Noahs Arke came;
A thing, which would have pos'd Adam to name;
Stranger then seaven Antiquaries studies,
Then Africks Monsters, Guianaes rarities.
Stranger then strangers; One, who for a Dane,
In the Danes Massacre had sure beene slaine,
If he had liv'd then; And without helpe dies,
When next the Prentises 'gainst Strangers rise.
One, whom the watch at noone lets scarce goe by,
One, to'whom th'examining Justice sure would cry,
'Sir, by your priesthood tell me what you are.'
His cloths were strange, though coarse; and black, though bare;
Sleevelesse his jerkin was, and it had beene
Velvet, but 'twas now (so much ground was seene)

Become Tufftaffatie; and our children shall
See it plaine Rashe awhile, then nought at all.
This thing hath travail'd, and saith, speakes all tongues,
And only know'th what to all States belongs;
Made of th'Accents, and best phrase of all these,
He speakes one language; If strange meats displease,
Art can deceive, or hunger force my tast,
But Pedants motley tongue, souldiers bumbast,
Mountebankes drugtongue, nor the termes of law
Are strong enough preparatives, to draw
Me to beare this: yet I must be content
With his tongue, in his tongue, call'd complement:
In which he can win widdowes, and pay scores,
Make men speake treason, cosen subtlest whores,
Out-flatter favorites, or outlie either
Jovius, or Surius, or both together.
He names mee,'and comes to mee; I whisper, 'God!
How have I sinn'd, that thy wraths furious rod,
This fellow chuseth me?' He saith, 'Sir,
I love your judgement; Whom doe you prefer,
For the best linguist?' And I seelily
Said, that I thought Calepines Dictionarie;
'Nay, but of men, most sweet Sir?' Beza then,
Some Jesuites, and two reverend men
Of our two Academies, I nam'd; There
He stopt mee,'and said, 'Nay, your Apostles were
Good pretty linguists, and so Panurge was;
Yet a poore gentleman, all these may passe
By travaile.' Then, as if he would have sold
His tongue, he prais'd it, and such wonders told
That I was faine to say, 'If you'had liv'd, Sir,
Time enough to have beene Interpreter
To Babells bricklayers, sure the Tower had stood.'
He adds, 'If of court life you knew the good,
You would leave lonenesse.' I said, 'Not alone
My lonenesse is. But Spartanes fashion,
To teach by painting drunkards, doth not tast

Now; Aretines pictures have made few chast;
No more can Princes courts, though there be few
Better pictures of vice, teach me vertue.'
He, like to'a high stretcht lute string squeakt, 'O Sir,
'Tis sweet to talke of Kings.' 'At Westminster,'
Said I, 'The man that keepes the Abbey tombes,
And for his price doth with who ever comes,
Of all our Harries, and our Edwards talke,
From King to King and all their kin can walke:
Your eares shall heare nought, but Kings; your eyes meet
Kings only; The way to it, is Kingstreet.'
He smack'd, and cry'd, 'He's base, Mechanique, coarse,
So'are all your Englishmen in their discourse.
Are not your Frenchmen neate?' 'Mine? as you see,
I'have but one Frenchman, looke, hee followes mee.'
'Certes they'are neatly cloth'd; I,'of this minde am,
Your only wearing is your Grogaram.'
'Not so Sir, I have more.' Under this pitch
He would not flie; I chaff'd him; But as Itch
Scratch'd into smart, and as blunt iron ground
Into an edge, hurts worse: So, I (foole) found,
Crossing hurt mee; To fit my sullennesse,
He to another key, his stile doth addresse,
And askes, 'What newes?' I tell him of new playes.
He takes my hand, and as a Still, which staies
A Sembriefe, 'twixt each drop, he nigardly,
As loth to'enrich mee, so tells many'a lie.
More then ten Hollensheads, or Halls, or Stowes,
Of triviall houshold trash he knowes; He knowes
When the Queene frown'd, or smil'd, and he knowes what
A subtle States-man may gather of that;
He knowes who loves; whom; and who by poyson
Hasts to an Offices reversion;
He knowes who'hath sold his land, and now doth beg
A licence, old iron, bootes, shooes, and egge-
shels to transport; Shortly boyes shall not play
At span-counter, or blow-point, but they pay

Toll to some Courtier;’And wiser then all us,
He knowes what Ladie is not painted; Thus
He with home-meats tries me; I belch, spue, spit,
Looke pale, and sickly, like a Patient; Yet
He thrusts me more; And as if he’undertooke
To say Gallo-Belgicus without booke
Speakes of all States, and deeds, that have been since
The Spaniards came, to the losse of Amyens.
Like a bigge wife, at sight of loathed meat,
Readie to travaile: So I sigh, and sweat
To heare this Makeron talke: In vaine; for yet,
Either my humour, or his owne to fit,
He like a priviledg’d spie, whom nothing can
Discredit, Libells now ‘gainst each great man.
He names a price for every office paid;
He saith, our warres thrive ill, because delai’d;
That offices are entail’d, and that there are
Perpetuities of them, lasting as farre
As the last day; And that great officers,
Doe with the Pirates share, and Dunkirkers.
Who wasts in meat, in clothes, in horse, he notes;
Who loves Whores, who boyes, and who goats.
I more amas’d then Circes prisoners, when
They felt themselves turne beasts, felt my selfe then
Becomming Traytor, and mee thought I saw
One of our Giant Statutes ope his jaw
To sucke me in; for hearing him, I found
That as burnt venom’d Leachers doe grow sound
By giving others their soares, I might growe
Guilty, and he free: Therefore I did shew
All signes of loathing; But since I am in,
I must pay mine, and my forefathers sinne
To the last farthing; Therefore to my power
Toughly’and stubbornly’I beare this crosse; But the’houre
Of mercy now was come; He tries to bring
Me to pay’a fine to scape his torturing,
And saies, ‘Sir, can you spare me?’ I said, ‘Willingly.’

‘Nay, Sir, can you spare me’a crown?’ Thankfully I
Gave it, as Ransome; But as fidlers, still,
Though they be paid to be gone, yet needs will
Thrust one more jigge upon you: so did hee
With his long complementall thankes vexe me.
But he is gone, thankes to his needy want,
And the prerogative of my Crowne: Scant
His thankes were ended, when I, (which did see
All the court fill’d with more strange things then hee)
Ran from thence with such or more hast, then one
Who feares more actions, doth make from prison.
At home in wholesome solitarinesse
My precious soule began, the wretchednesse
Of suiters at court to mourne, and a trance
Like his, who dreamt he saw hell, did advance
It selfe on mee; Such men as he saw there,
I saw at court, and worse, and more; Low feare
Becomes the guiltie, not th’accuser; Then,
Shall I, nones slave, of high borne, or rais’d men
Feare frownes? And, my Mistresse Truth, betray thee
To th’huffing braggart, puft Nobility?
No, no, Thou which since yesterday hast beene
Almost about the whole world, hast thou seene,
O Sunne, in all thy journey, Vanitie,
Such as swells the bladder of our court? I
Thinke he which made your waxen garden, and
Transported it from Italy to stand
With us, at London, flouts our Presence, for
Just such gay painted things, which no sappe, nor
Tast have in them, ours are; And naturall
Some of the stocks are, their fruits, bastard all.
‘Tis ten a clock and past; All whom the Mues,
Baloune, Tennis, Dyet, or the stewes,
Had all the morning held, now the second
Time made ready, that day, in flocks, are found
In the Presence, and I, (God pardon mee.)
As fresh, and sweet their Apparrells be, as bee

The fields they sold to buy them;’For a King
Those hose are,’cry the flatterers; And bring
Them next weeke to the Theatre to sell;
Wants reach all states; Me seemes they doe as well
At stage, as court; All are players; who e’r lookes
(For themselves dare not goe) o’r Cheapside books,
Shall finde their wardrops Inventory. Now,
The Ladies come; As Pirats, which doe know
That there came weak ships fraught with Cutchannel,
The men board them; and praise, as they thinke, well,
Their beauties; they the mens wits; Both are bought.
Why good wits ne’r weare scarlet gownes, I thought
This cause, These men, mens wits for speeches buy,
And women buy all reds which scarlets die.
He call’d her beauty limetwigs, her haire net;
She feares her drugs ill laid, her haire loose set.
Would not Heraclitus laugh to see Macrine,
From hat, to shooe, himselfe at doore refine,
As if the Presence were a Moschite,’and lift
His skirts and hose, and call his clothes to shrift,
Making them confesse not only mortall
Great staines and holes in them; but veniall
Feathers and dust, wherewith they fornicate;
And then by Durers rules survay the state
Of his each limbe, and with strings the odds tries
Of his neck to his legge, and wast to thighes.
So in immaculate clothes, and Symetrie
Perfect as circles, with such nicetie
As a young Preacher at his first time goes
To preach, he enters, and a Lady which owes
Him not so much as good will, he arrests,
And unto her protests protests protests
So much as at Rome would serve to have throwne
Ten Cardinalls into th’Inquisition;
And whisperd ‘by Jesu’,so’often,that A
Pursevant would have ravish’d him away
For saying of our Ladies psalter; But ‘tis fit

That they each other plague, they merit it.
But here comes Glorius that will plague them both,
Who, in the other extreme, only doth
Call a rough carelessnesse, good fashion;
Whose cloak his spurres teare; whom he spits on
He cares not; His ill words doe no harme
To him; he rusheth in, as if ‘Arme, arme,’
He meant to crie; And though his face be’as ill
As theirs which in old hangings whip Christ, yet still
He strives to looke worse, he keepes all in awe;
Jeasts like a licenc’d foole, commands like law.
Tyr’d, now I leave this place, and but pleas’d so
As men which from gaoles to’execution goe,
Goe through the great chamber (why is it hung
With the seaven deadly sinnes?); Being among
Those Askaparts, men big enough to throw
Charing Crosse for a barre, men that doe know
No token of worth, but ‘Queenes man’, and fine
Living, barrells of beefe, flaggons of wine;
I shooke like a spyed Spie. Preachers which are
Seas of Wit and Arts, you can, then dare,
Drowne the sinnes of this place, for, for mee
Which am but a scarce brooke, it enough shall bee
To wash the staines away; Though I yet
With Macchabees modestie, the knowne merit
Of my worke lessen: yet some wise man shall,
I hope, esteeme my writs Canonicall.

SATYRE V

THOU SHALT NOT LAUGH IN THIS LEAFE, MUSE, NOR THEY

Thou shalt not laugh in this leafe, Muse, nor they
Whom any pity warmes; He which did lay
Rules to make Courtiers, (hee being understood
May make good Courtiers, but who Courtiers good?)

Frees from the sting of jests all who'in extreme
Are wrech'd or wicked: of these two a theame
Charity and liberty give me. What is hee
Who Officers rage, and Suiters misery
Can write, and jest? If all things be in all,
As I thinke, since all, which were, are, and shall
Bee, be made of the same elements:
Each thing, each thing implyes or represents.
Then man is a world; in which, Officers
Are the vast ravishing seas; and Suiters,
Springs; now full, now shallow, now drye; which, to
That which drownes them, run: These selfe reasons do
Prove the world a man, in which, officers
Are the devouring stomacke, and Suiters
Th'excrements, which they voyd. All men are dust;
How much worse are Suiters, who to mens lust
Are made preyes? O worse then dust, or wormes meat,
For they do'eate you now, whose selves wormes shall eate.
They are the mills which grinde you, yet you are
The winde which drives them; and a wastfull warre
Is fought against you, and you fight it; they
Adulterate lawe, and you prepare their way
Like wittals; th'issue your owne ruine is.
Greatest and fairest Empresse, know you this?
Alas, no more then Thames calme head doth know
Whose meades her armes drowne, or whose corne o'rflow:
You Sir, whose righteousnes she loves, whom I
By having leave to serve, am most richly
For service paid, authoriz'd, now beginne
To know and weed out this enormous sinne.
O Age of rusty iron! some better wit
Call it some worse name, if ought equall it;
Th'iron Age *that* was, when justice was sold; now
Injustice is sold dearer farre. Allow
All demands, fees, and duties; gamsters, anon
The mony which you sweat, and sweare for, is gon
Into'other hands: So controverted lands

Scape, like Angelica, the strivers hands.
If Law be in the Judges heart, and hee
Have no heart to resist letter, or fee,
Where wilt thou'appeale? Powre of the Courts below
Flow from the first maine head, and these can throw
Thee, if they sucke thee in, to misery,
To fetters, halters; But if th'injury
Steele thee to dare complaine, Alas, thou go'st
Against the stream, when upwards: when thou'art most
Heavy'and most faint; and in these labours they,
'Gainst whom thou should'st complaine, will in the way
Become great seas, o'r which, when thou shalt bee
Forc'd to make golden bridges, thou shalt see
That all thy gold was drown'd in them before;
All things follow their like, only who have may'have more.
Judges are Gods; he who made and said them so,
Meant not that men should be forc'd to them to goe,
By meanes of Angels; When supplications
We send to God, to Dominations,
Powers, Cherubins, and all heavens Courts, if wee
Should pay fees as here, daily bread would be
Scarce to Kings; so 'tis. Would it not anger
A Stoicke, a coward, yea a Martyr,
To see a Pursivant come in, and call
All his cloathes, Copes; Bookes, Primers; and all
His Plate, Challices; and mistake them away,
And aske a fee for comming? Oh, ne'r may
Faire lawes white reverend name be strumpeted,
To warrant thefts: she is established
Recorder to Destiny, on earth, and shee
Speakes Fates words, and but tells us who must bee
Rich, who poore, who in chaires, who in jayles:
Shee is all faire, but yet hath foule long nailes,
With which she scracheth Suiters; In bodies
Of men, so'in law, nailes are th'extremities,
So Officers stretch to more then Law can doe,
As our nailes reach what no else part comes to.

Why bar’st thou to yon Officer? Foole, Hath hee
Got those goods, for which erst men bar’d to thee?
Foole, twice, thrice, thou’hast bought wrong,’and now hungerly
Beg’st right; But that dole comes not till these dye.
Thou’had’st much, and lawes Urim and Thummim trie
Thou wouldst for more; and for all hast paper
Enough to cloath all the great Carricks Pepper.
Sell that, and by that thou much more shalt leese,
Then Haman, when he sold his Antiquities.

SATIRE VI.

MEN WRITE THAT LOVE AND REASON DISAGREE

MEN write that love and reason disagree,
But I ne’er saw ‘t express’d as ‘tis in thee.
Well, I may lead thee, God must make thee see,
But, thine eyes blind too, there’s no hope for thee.
Thou say’st she’s wise and witty, fair and free;
All these are reasons why she should scorn thee.
Thou dost protest thy love, and wouldst it show
By matching her as she would match her foe;
And wouldst persuade her to a worse offence,
Than that whereof thou didst accuse her wench.
Reason there’s none for thee, but thou mayst vex
Her with example. Say, for fear her sex
Shun her, she needs must change; I do not see
How reason e’er can bring that ‘must’ to thee.
Thou art a match a justice to rejoice,
Fit to be his, and not his daughter’s choice.
Urged 1 with his threats she’d scarcely stay with thee,
And wouldst thou have this to choose thee, being free?
Go, then, and punish some soon-gotten stuff;
For her dead husband this hath mourn’d enough,
In hating thee. Thou mayst one like this meet;
For spite take her, prove kind, make thy breath sweet,
Let her see she hath cause, and, to bring to thee
Honest children, let her dishonest be.
If she be a widow I’ll warrant her
She’ll thee before her first husband prefer,
And will wish thou hadst had her maidenhead,
She’ll love thee so! for then thou hadst been dead.
But thou such strong love and weak reasons hast,
Thou must thrive there, or ever live disgraced.
Yet pause awhile; and thou mayst live to see
A time to come, wherein she may beg thee.

If thou’lt not pause nor change, she’ll beg thee now,
Do what she can, love for nothing she’ll allow.
Besides, here were too much gain and merchandise,
And when thou art rewarded, desert dies.
Now thou hast odds of him she loves; he may doubt
Her constancy, but none can put thee out.
Again, be thy love true, she’ll prove divine,
And in the end the good on’t will be thine.
For, though thou must ne’er think of other love,
And so wilt advance her as high above
Virtue, as cause above effect can be;
‘Tis virtue to be chaste, which she’ll make thee.

SATIRE VII.

TO SIR NICHOLAS SMYTH

SLEEP, next society and true friendship,
Man’s best contentment, doth securely slip
His passions, and the world’s troubles; rock me,
O sleep, wean’d from my 1 dear friend’s company,
In a cradle free from dreams or thoughts, there
Where poor men lie, for kings asleep do fear.
Here sleep’s house by famous Ariosto,
By silver-tongued Ovid, and many moe
— Perhaps by golden-mouthed Spenser too, pardie —
Which builded was some dozen stories high,
I had repair’d, but that it was so rotten,
As sleep awaked by rats from thence was gotten;
And I will build no new, for by my will
Thy father’s house shall be the fairest still
In Exeter. Yet, methinks, for all their wit,
Those wits that say nothing, best describe it.
Without it there is no sense; only in this
Sleep is unlike a long parenthesis.
Not to save charges, but would I had slept
The time I spent in London, when I kept
Fighting and untruss’d gallants’ company,
In which Natta, the new knight, seized on me,
And offered me th’ experience he had bought
With great expense. I found him thoroughly taught
In curing burns. His thing had had more scars
Than T — — himself; like Epps it often wars,
And still is hurt. For his body and state
The physic and counsel — which came too late
‘Gainst whores and dice — he now on me bestows;
Most superficially he speaks of those.
I found by him, least sound, him who most knows.
He swears well, speaks ill, but best of clothes,

What fits summer, what winter, what the spring.
He had living, but now these ways come in
His whole revenues. Where his whore now dwells,
And hath dwelt, since his father's death, he tells.
Yea, he tells most cunningly each hid cause
Why whores forsake their bawds. To these, some laws
He knows of the duel, and touch his skill 2
The least jot in that or these, he quarrel will,
Though sober, but ne'er fought. I know
What made his valour undubb'd windmill go,
Within a pint at most; yet for all this
— Which is most strange — Natta thinks no man is
More honest than himself. Thus men may want
Conscience, whilst being brought up ignorant,
They use themselves to vice. And besides those
Illiberal arts forenamed, no vicar knows
Nor other captain less than he; his schools
Are ordinaries, where civil men seem fools,
Or are for being there; his best books, plays,
Where, meeting godly scenes, perhaps he prays.
His first set prayer was for his father, ill 3
And sick — that he might die; that had, until
The lands were gone he troubled God no more,
And then ask'd him but his right — that the whore
Whom he had kept, might now keep him; she spent,
They left each other on even terms; she went
To Bridewell, he unto the wars, where want
Hath made him valiant, and a lieutenant
He is become; where, as they pass apace,
He steps aside, and for his captain's place
He prays again — tells God he will confess
His sins; swear, drink, dice, and whore thenceforth less,
On this condition, that his captain die
And he succeed; but his prayer did not. They
Both cashier'd came home, and he is braver now
Than his captain; all men wonder, few know how;
Can he rob? 'No.' Cheat? 'No.' Or doth he spend

His own? ‘No; Fidus, he is thy dear friend;
That keeps him up.’ I would thou wert thine own,
Or hadst as good a friend as thou art one.
No present want, nor future hope made me
Desire, as once I did, thy friend to be;
But he had cruelly possess’d thee then,
And as our neighbours, the Low-Country men,
Being — whilst they were loyal, with tyranny
Oppress’d — broke loose, have since refused to be
Subject to good kings, I found even so,
Wert thou well rid of him, thou’dst have no moe.
Couldst thou but choose, as well as love, to none
Thou shouldst be second. Turtle and Damon
Should give thee place in songs, and lovers sick
Should make thee only love’s hieroglyphic.
Thy impress should be the loving elm and vine,
Where now an ancient oak with ivy twine.
Destroy’d thy symbol is! O dire mischance!
And O vile verse! And yet our Abraham Fraunce
Writes thus, and jests not. Good Fidus for this
Must pardon me; satires bite when they kiss.
But as for Natta, we have since fallen out;
Here on his knees he pray’d; else we had fought.
And because God would not he should be winner,
Nor yet would have the death of such a sinner,
At his seeking our quarrel is deferr’d.
I’ll leave him at his prayers, and, as I heard,
His last; and, Fidus, you and I do know
I was his friend, and durst have been his foe,
And would be either yet; but he dares be
Neither yet; sleep blots him out and takes in thee.
The mind, you know, is like a table-book;
The old unwiped, new writing never took.
Hear how the ushers’ checks, cupboard and fire,
I pass’d — by which degrees young men aspire
In court. And how that idle and she state
— When as my judgment cleared — my soul did hate;

How I found there — if that my trifling pen
Durst take so hard a task — kings were but men,
And by their place more noted, if they err;
How they and their lords unworthy men prefer;
And, as unthrifts, had rather give away
Great sums to flatterers, than small debts pay.
So they their greatness hide, and greatness show,
By giving them that which to worth they owe.
What treason is, and what did Essex kill,
Not true treason, but treason handled ill;
And which of them stood for their country's good,
Or what might be the cause of so much blood;
He said she stunk; and men might not have said
That she was old before that she was dead.
His case was hard to do or suffer; loth
To do, he made it harder, and did both.
Too much preparing lost them all their lives;
Like some in plagues kill with preservatives.
Friends, like land soldiers in a storm at sea,
Not knowing what to do, for him did pray.
They told it all the world, where was their wit?
Cuffe's putting on a sword might have told it.
And princes must fear favourites more than foes,
For still beyond revenge ambition goes.
How since her death with sumpter-horse that Scot
Hath rid, who, at his coming up, had not
A sumpter-dog. But till that I can write
Things worth thy tenth reading (dear Nick), good-night.

UPON MR. THOMAS CORYATS CRUDITIES

OH, to what height will love of greatness drive
Thy learned spirit, sesqui-superlative?
Venice' vast lake thou'st seen, and wouldst seek then
Some vaster thing, and found'st a courtesan.
That inland sea having discover'd well,
A cellar-gulf, where one might sail to hell
From Heidelberg, thou longed'st to see; and thou
This book, greater than all, producest now.
Infinite work! which doth so far extend,
That none can study it to any end.
'Tis no one thing; it is not fruit nor root,
Nor poorly limited with head or foot.
If man be therefore man, because he can
Reason and laugh, thy book doth half make man.
One-half being made, thy modesty was such,
That thou on th' other half wouldst never touch.
When wilt thou be at full, great lunatic?
Not till thou exceed the world? canst thou be like
A prosperous nose-born wen, which sometimes grows
To be far greater than the mother-nose?
Go then, and as to thee, when thou didst go,
Münster did towns, and Gesner authors show,
Mount now to Gallo-Belgicus; appear
As deep a statesman, as a gazetteer. 1
Homely and familiarly, when thou comest back,
Talk of Will Conqueror, and Prester Jack.
Go, bashful man, lest here thou blush to look
Upon the progress of thy glorious book,
To which both Indies sacrifices send.
The West sent gold, which thou didst freely spend,
Meaning to see 't no more, upon the press.
The East sends hither her deliciousness,
And thy leaves must embrace what comes from thence, 2
The myrrh, the pepper, and the frankincense.

This magnifies thy leaves; but if they stoop
To neighbour wares, when merchants do unhoop
Voluminous barrels; if thy leaves do then
Convey these wares in parcels unto men;
If for vast tons 3 of currants and of figs,
Of medicinal and aromatic twigs,
Thy leaves a better method do provide,
Divide to pounds, and ounces subdivide;
If they stoop lower yet, and vent our wares,
Home-manufactures, to thick popular fairs;
If omni-pregnant there upon warm stalls
They hatch all wares for which the buyer calls;
Then thus thy leaves we justly may commend,
That they all kind of matter comprehend.
Thus thou, by means which th' ancients never took,
A Pandect makest, and universal book.
The bravest heroës, for public good,
Scattered in divers lands their limbs and blood;
Worst malefactors, to whom men are prize,
Do public good, cut in anatomies;
So will thy book in pieces for a lord,
Which casts at Portescue's, and all the board
Provide whole books; each leaf enough will be
For friends to pass time, and keep company.
Can all carouse up thee? no, thou must fit
Measures and fill out for the half-pint wit.
Some shall wrap pills, and save a friend's life so;
Some shall stop muskets, and so kill a foe.
Thou shalt not ease the critics of next age
So much, as once their hunger to assuage;
Nor shall wit-pirates hope to find thee lie
All in one bottom, in one library.
Some leaves may paste strings there in other books,
And so one may, which on another looks,
Pilfer, alas, a little wit from you;
But hardly much; and yet I think this true;
As Sibyl's was, your book is mystical,

For every piece is as much worth as all.
Therefore mine impotency I confess;
The healths, which my brain bears, must be far less;
Thy giant wit o’erthrows me; I am gone;
And rather than read all, I would read none.

IN EUNDEM MACARONICUM

QUOT, dos haec, Linguists perfetti, Disticha fairont,
  Tot cuerdos Statesmen, hic livre fara tuus
Es sat a my l’honneur estre hic inteso; car I leave
  L’honra, de personne n’estre creduto, tibi.

EXPLICIT JOANNES DONES.

MARRIAGE SONGS

CONTENTS

EPITHALAMION ON THE LADY ELIZABETH AND COUNT PALATINE BEING MARRIED ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.
ECLOGUE AT THE MARRIAGE OF THE EARL OF SOMERSET.
EPITHALAMION MADE AT LINCOLN'S INN.

EPITHALAMION ON THE LADY ELIZABETH AND COUNT PALATINE BEING MARRIED ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

I

HAIL Bishop Valentine, whose day this is;
All the air is thy diocese,
And all the chirping choristers
And other birds are thy parishioners;
Thou marriest every year
The lyric lark, and the grave whispering dove,
The sparrow that neglects his life for love,
The household bird with the red stomacher;
Thou makest the blackbird speed as soon,
As doth the goldfinch, or the halcyon;
The husband cock looks out, and straight is sped,
And meets his wife, which brings her feather-bed.
This day more cheerfully than ever shine;
This day, which might enflame thyself, old Valentine.

II.

Till now, thou warmd'st with multiplying loves
Two larks, two sparrows, or two doves;
All that is nothing unto this;
For thou this day couplest two phoenixes;
Thou makst a taper see
What the sun never saw, and what the ark
— Which was of fouls and beasts the cage and park —
Did not contain, one bed contains, through thee;
Two phoenixes, whose joined breasts
Are unto one another mutual nests,
Where motion kindles such fires as shall give
Young phoenixes, and yet the old shall live;

Whose love and courage never shall decline,
But make the whole year through, thy day, O Valentine.

III.

Up then, fair phoenix bride, frustrate the sun;
Thyself from thine affection
Takest warmth enough, and from thine eye
All lesser birds will take their jollity.
Up, up, fair bride, and call
Thy stars from out their several boxes, take
Thy rubies, pearls, and diamonds forth, and make
Thyself a constellation of them all;
And by their blazing signify
That a great princess falls, but doth not die.
Be thou a new star, that to us portends
Ends of much wonder; and be thou those ends.
Since thou dost this day in new glory shine,
May all men date records from this day, Valentine.

IV.

Come forth, come forth, and as one glorious flame
Meeting another grows the same,
So meet thy Frederick, and so
To an inseparable union go,
Since separation
Falls not on such things as are infinite,
Nor things, which are but one, can disunite.
You're twice inseparable, great, and one;
Go then to where the bishop stays,
To make you one, his way, which divers ways
Must be effected; and when all is past,
And that you're one, by hearts and hands made fast,
You two have one way left, yourselves to entwine,
Besides this bishop's knot, of Bishop Valentine.

V.

But O, what ails the sun, that here he stays,
Longer to-day than other days?
Stays he new light from these to get?
And finding here such stars, is loth to set?
And why do you two walk,
So slowly paced in this procession?
Is all your care but to be look'd upon,
And be to others spectacle, and talk?
The feast with gluttonous delays
Is eaten, and too long their meat they praise;
The masquers come late, and I think, will stay,
Like fairies, till the cock crow them away.
Alas! did not antiquity assign
A night as well as day, to thee, old Valentine?

VI.

They did, and night is come; and yet we see
Formalities retarding thee.
What mean these ladies, which — as though
They were to take a clock in pieces — go
So nicely about the bride?
A bride, before a " Good-night" could be said,
Should vanish from her clothes into her bed,
As souls from bodies steal, and are not spied.
But now she's laid; what though she be?
Yet there are more delays, for where is he?
He comes and passeth through sphere after sphere;
First her sheets, then her arms, then anywhere.
Let not this day, then, but this night be thine;
Thy day was but the eve to this, O Valentine.

VII.

Here lies a she sun, and a he moon there;
She gives the best light to his sphere;
Or each is both, and all, and so
They unto one another nothing owe;

And yet they do, but are
So just and rich in that coin which they pay,
That neither would, nor needs forbear, nor stay;
Neither desires to be spared nor to spare.
They quickly pay their debt, and then
Take no acquittances, but pay again;
They pay, they give, they lend, and so let fall
No such occasion to be liberal.
More truth, more courage in these two do shine,
Than all thy turtles have and sparrows, Valentine.

VIII.

And by this act these two phoenixes
Nature again restorèd is;
For since these two are two no more,
There's but one phoenix still, as was before.
Rest now at last, and we —
As satyrs watch the sun's uprise — will stay
Waiting when your eyes opened let out day,
Only desired because your face we see.
Others near you shall whispering speak,
And wagers lay, at which side day will break,
And win by observing, then, whose hand it is
That opens first a curtain, hers or his:
This will be tried to-morrow after nine,
Till which hour, we thy day enlarge, O Valentine.

ECLOGUE AT THE MARRIAGE OF THE EARL OF SOMERSET.

1613, DECEMBER 26.

ALLOPHANES FINDING IDIOS IN THE COUNTRY IN CHRISTMAS TIME, REPREHENDS HIS ABSENCE FROM COURT, AT THE MARRIAGE OF THE EARL OF SOMERSET; IDIOS GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF HIS PURPOSE THEREIN, AND OF HIS ACTIONS THERE.

ALLOPHANES.

UNSEASONABLE man, statue of ice,
What could to countries solitude entice
Thee, in this year’s cold and decrepit time?
Nature’s instinct draws to the warmer clime
Even smaller birds, who by that courage dare
In numerous fleets sail through their sea, the air.
What delicacy can in fields appear,
Whilst Flora herself doth a frieze jerkin wear?
Whilst winds do all the trees and hedges strip
Of leaves, to furnish rods enough to whip
Thy madness from thee, and all springs by frost
Have taken cold, and their sweet murmurs lost?
If thou thy faults or fortunes wouldst lament
With just solemnity, do it in Lent.
At court the spring already advanced is,
The sun stays longer up; and yet not his
The glory is; far other, other fires.
First, zeal to prince and state, then love’s desires
Burn in one breast, and like heaven’s two great lights,
The first doth govern days, the other, nights.
And then that early light which did appear
Before the sun and moon created were,
The princes favour is diffused o’er all,
From which all fortunes, names, and natures fall.

Then from those wombs of stars, the bride’s bright eyes,
At every glance, a constellation flies,
And sows the court with stars, and doth prevent
In light and power, the all-eyed firmament.
First her eyes kindle other ladies’ eyes,
Then from their beams their jewels’ lustres rise,
And from their jewels torches do take fire,
And all is warmth, and light, and good desire.
Most other courts, alas! are like to hell,
Where in dark places, fire without light doth dwell;
Or but like stoves; for lust and envy get
Continual, but artificial heat.
Here zeal and love grown one all clouds digest,
And make our court an everlasting east.
And canst thou be from thence?

IDIOS. No, I am there;
As heaven — to men disposed — is everywhere,
So are those courts, whose princes animate
Not only all their house but all their state.
Let no man think, because he’s full, he hath all.
Kings — as their pattern, God — are liberal
Not only in fullness, but capacity,
Enlarging narrow men to feel and see,
And comprehend the blessings they bestow.
So, reclused hermits oftentimes do know
More of heaven’s glory than a worldling can.
As man is of the world, the heart of man
Is an epitome of God’s great book
Of creatures, and man need no farther look;
So is the country of courts, where sweet peace doth,
As their one common soul, give life to both;
And am I then from court?

ALLOPHANES. Dreamer, thou art:
Think’st thou, fantastic, that thou hast a part
In the Indian fleet, because thou hast

A little spice or amber in thy taste?
Because thou art not frozen, art thou warm?
Seest thou all good, because thou seest no harm?
The earth doth in her inner bowels hold
Stuff well-disposed, and which would fain be gold;
But never shall, except it chance to lie
So upward, that heaven gild it with his eye.
As, for divine things, faith comes from above,
So, for best civil use, all tinctures move
From higher powers; from God religion springs,
Wisdom and honour from the use of kings:
Then unbeguile thyself, and know with me,
That angels, though on earth employ'd they be,
Are still in heaven, so is he still at home
That doth abroad to honest actions come.
Chide thyself then, O fool, which yesterday
Mightst have read more than all thy books bewray;
Hast thou a history, which doth present
A court, where all affections do assent
Unto the king's, and that that king's are just;
And where it is no levity to trust;
Where there is no ambition, but to obey;
Where men need whisper nothing, and yet may;
Where the king's favours are so placed, that all
Find that the king therein is liberal
To them, in him, because his favours bend
To virtue, to the which they all pretend?
Thou hast no such; yet here was this, and more.
An earnest lover, wise then, and before,
Our little Cupid hath sued livery,
And is no more in his minority;
He is admitted now into that breast
Where the king's counsels and his secrets rest.
What hast thou lost, O ignorant man?

IDIOS. I knew
All this, and only therefore I withdrew.

To know and feel all this, and not to have
Words to express it, makes a man a grave
Of his own thoughts; I would not therefore stay
At a great feast, having no grace to say.
And yet I ‘scaped not here; for being come
Full of the common joy, I utter’d some.
Read then this nuptial song, which was not made
Either the court or men’s hearts to invade;
But since I am dead and buried, I could frame
No epitaph, which might advance my fame
So much as this poor song, which testifies
I did unto that day some sacrifice.

I.

THE TIME OF THE MARRIAGE.

Thou art reprieved, old year, thou shalt not die;
  Though thou upon thy death-bed lie,
  And should’st within five days expire,
Yet thou art rescued by a mightier fire,
  Than thy old soul, the sun,
When he doth in his largest circle run.
The passage of the west or east would thaw,
And open wide their easy liquid jaw
To all our ships, could a Promethean art
Either unto the northern pole impart
The fire of these inflaming eyes, or of this loving
    heart.

II.

EQUALITY OF PERSONS.

But undiscerning Muse, which heart, which eyes,
  In this new couple, dost thou prize,

When his eye as inflaming is
As hers, and her heart loves as well as his?
Be tried by beauty, and then
The bridegroom is a maid, and not a man;
If by that manly courage they be tried,
Which scorns unjust opinion; then the bride
Becomes a man. Should chance or envy's art
Divide these two, whom nature scarce did part,
Since both have the inflaming eye, and both the
loving heart?

III.

RAISING OF THE BRIDEGROOM.

Though it be some divorce to think of you
Single, so much one are you two,
Let me here contemplate thee,
First, cheerful bridegroom, and first let me see,
How thou prevent'st the sun,
And his red foaming horses dost outrun;
How, having laid down in thy Sovereign's breast
All businesses, from thence to reinvest
Them when these triumphs cease, thou forward art
To show to her, who doth the like impart,
The fire of thy inflaming eyes, and of thy loving heart.

IV.

RAISING OF THE BRIDE.

But now to thee, fair bride, it is some wrong,
To think thou wert in bed so long.
Since soon thou liest down first, 'tis fit
Thou in first rising shouldst allow for it.
Powder thy radiant hair,

Which if without such ashes thou wouldst wear,
Thou which, to all which come to look upon,
Wert meant for Phoebus, wouldst be Phaëton.
For our ease, give thine eyes th’ unusual part
Of joy, a tear; so quench’d, thou mayst impart,
To us that come, thy inflaming eyes; to him, thy
loving heart.

V.

HER APPARELLING.

Thus thou descend’st to our infirmity,
Who can the sun in water see.
So dost thou, when in silk and gold
Thou cloud’st thyself; since we which do behold
Are dust and worms, ‘tis just,
Our objects be the fruits of worms and dust.
Let every jewel be a glorious star,
Yet stars are not so pure as their spheres are;
And though thou stoop, to appear to us, in part,
Still in that picture thou entirely art,
Which thy inflaming eyes have made within his
loving heart.

VI.

GOING TO THE CHAPEL.

Now from your easts you issue forth, and we,
As men, which through a cypress see
The rising sun, do think it two;
So, as you go to church, do think of you;
But that veil being gone,
By the church rites you are from thenceforth one.
The church triumphant made this match before,

And now the militant doth strive no more.
Then, reverend priest, who God's Recorder art,
Do, from his dictates, to these two impart
All blessings which are seen, or thought, by angel's
eye or heart.

VII.

THE BENEDICTION.

Blest pair of swans, O may you interbring
Daily new joys, and never sing;
Live, till all grounds of wishes fail,
Till honour, yea, till wisdom grow so stale,
That new great heights to try,
I must serve your ambition, to die;
Raise heirs, and may here, to the world's end, live
Heirs from this king, to take thanks, you, to give.
Nature and grace do all, and nothing art;
May never age or error overthwart
With any west these radiant eyes, with any north
this heart.

VIII.

FEASTS AND REVELS.

But you are over-blest. Plenty this day
Injures; it causeth time to stay;
The tables groan, as though this feast
Would, as the flood, destroy all fowl and beast.
And were the doctrine new
That the earth moved, this day would make it true;
For every part to dance and revel goes,
They tread the air, and fall not where they rose.
Though six hours since the sun to bed did part,

The masks and banquets will not yet impart
A sunset to these weary eyes, a centre to this heart.

IX.

THE BRIDE’S GOING TO BED.

What mean’st thou, bride, this company to keep?
  To sit up, till thou fain wouldst sleep?
  Thou mayst not, when thou’rt laid, do so;
Thyself must to him a new banquet grow;
  And you must entertain
And do all this day’s dances o’er again.
Know that if sun and moon together do
Rise in one point, they do not set so too.
Therefore thou mayst, fair bride, to bed depart;
Thou art not gone, being gone; where’er thou art,
Thou leavest in him thy watchful eyes, in him thy
  loving heart.

X.

THE BRIDEGROOM’S COMING.

As he that sees a star fall, runs apace,
  And finds a jelly in the place,
  So doth the bridegroom haste as much,
Being told this star is fallen, and finds her such.
  And as friends may look strange,
By a new fashion, or apparel’s change,
Their souls, though long acquainted they had been,
These clothes, their bodies, never yet had seen.
Therefore at first she modestly might start,
But must forthwith surrender every part,
As freely as each to each before gave either eye or

heart.

XI.

THE GOOD-NIGHT.

Now, as in Tullia’s tomb, one lamp burnt clear,
  Unchanged for fifteen hundred year,
  May these love-lamps we here enshrine,
In warmth, light, lasting, equal the divine.
  Fire ever doth aspire,
And makes all like itself, turns all to fire,
But ends in ashes; which these cannot do,
For none of these is fuel, but fire too.
This is joy’s bonfire, then, where love’s strong arts
Make of so noble individual parts
One fire of four inflaming eyes, and of two loving hearts.

IDIOS. As I have brought this song, that I may do
A perfect sacrifice, I’ll burn it too.

ALLOPHANES. No, sir. This paper I have justly got,
For, in burnt incense, the perfume is not
His only that presents it, but of all;
Whatever celebrates this festival
Is common, since the joy thereof is so.
Nor may yourself be priest; but let me go
Back to the court, and I will lay it upon
Such altars, as prize your devotion.

EPITHALAMION MADE AT LINCOLN’S INN.

I

HAIL sun-beams in the east are spread;
Leave, leave, fair bride, your solitary bed;
No more shall you return to it alone;
It nurseth sadness, and your body’s print,
Like to a grave, the yielding down doth dint;
You, and your other you, meet there anon.
Put forth, put forth, that warm balm-breathing thigh,
Which when next time you in these sheets will smother,
There it must meet another,
Which never was, but must be, oft, more nigh.
Come glad from thence, go gladder than you came;
To-day put on perfection, and a woman’s name.

Daughters of London, you which be
Our golden mines, and furnish’d treasury;
You which are angels, yet still bring with you
Thousands of angels on your marriage days;
Help with your presence, and devise to praise
These rites, which also unto you grow due;
Conceitedly dress her, and be assign’d,
By you fit place for every flower and jewel;
Make her for love fit fuel,
As gay as Flora and as rich as Ind;
So may she, fair and rich in nothing lame,
To-day put on perfection, and a woman’s name.

And you frolic patricians,
Sons of those senators, wealth’s deep oceans;
Ye painted courtiers, barrels of other’s wits;
Ye countrymen, who but your beasts love none;
Ye of those fellowships, whereof he’s one,
Of study and play made strange hermaphrodites,
Here shine; this bridegroom to the temple bring.

Lo, in yon path which store of strew’d flowers graceth,
The sober virgin paceth;
Except my sight fail, ‘tis no other thing.
Weep not, nor blush, here is no grief nor shame,
To-day put on perfection, and a woman’s name.

Thy two-leaved gates, fair temple, unfold,
And these two in thy sacred bosom hold,
Till mystically join’d but one they be;
Then may thy lean and hunger-starvèd womb
Long time expect their bodies, and their tomb,
Long after their own parents fatten thee.
All elder claims, and all cold barrenness,
All yielding to new loves, be far for ever,
Which might these two dissever;
Always, all th’other may each one possess;
For the best bride, best worthy of praise and fame,
To-day puts on perfection, and a woman’s name.

Winter days bring much delight,
Not for themselves, but for they soon bring night;
Other sweets wait thee than these diverse meats,
Other disports than dancing jollities,
Other love-tricks than glancing with the eyes,
But that the sun still in our half sphere sweats;
He flies in winter, but he now stands still.
Yet shadows turn; noon point he hath attain’d;
His steeds will be restrain’d,
But gallop lively down the western hill.
Thou shalt, when he hath run the heaven’s half frame,
To-night put on perfection, and a woman’s name.

The amorous evening star is rose,
Why then should not our amorous star inclose
Herself in her wish’d bed? Release your strings,
Musicians; and dancers take some truce
With these your pleasing labours, for great use

As much weariness as perfection brings.
You, and not only you, but all toil’d beasts
Rest duly; at night all their toils are dispensed;
But in their beds commenced
Are other labours, and more dainty feasts.
She goes a maid, who, lest she turn the same,
To-night puts on perfection, and a woman’s name.

Thy virgin’s girdle now untie,
And in thy nuptial bed, love’s altar, lie
A pleasing sacrifice; now dispossess
Thee of these chains and robes, which were put on
To adorn the day, not thee; for thou, alone,
Like virtue and truth, art best in nakedness.
This bed is only to virginity
A grave, but to a better state, a cradle.
Till now thou wast but able
To be, what now thou art; then, that by thee
No more be said, “ I may be,” but, “ I am,”
To-night put on perfection, and a woman’s name.

Even like a faithful man content,
That this life for a better should be spent,
So she a mother’s rich stile doth prefer,
And at the bridegroom’s wish’d approach doth lie,
Like an appointed lamb, when tenderly
The priest comes on his knees to embowel her.
Now sleep or watch with more joy; and, O light
Of heaven, to-morrow rise thou hot, and early;
This sun will love so dearly
Her rest, that long, long we shall want her sight.
Wonders are wrought, for she, which had no maim,
To-night puts on perfection, and a woman’s name.

VERSE LETTERS

CONTENTS

The Storm
The Calm
To Mr B. B.
To Mr C. B.
To Mr S. B.
To Mr E. G.
To Mr I. L.
To Mr I. L.
To Mr R. W.
To Mr R. W.
To Mr R. W.
To Mr R. W.
To Mr Roland Woodward
To Mr T. W.
To Mr T. W.
To Mr T. W.
To Mr T. W.
To Sir Henry Goodyer
A Letter Written by Sir H. G. and J. D. alternis vicibus
To Sir Henry Wotton
To Sir Henry Wotton
To Sir Henry Wotton, at his going Ambassador to Venice
H. W. in Hibernia Belligeranti
To Sir Edward Herbert, at Juliers
To Mrs M. H. (Mad paper stay)
To the Countess of Bedford at New Year's Tide
To the Countess of Bedford
To the Countess of Bedford

To the Countess of Bedford
To the Countess of Bedford
To the Countess of Bedford
To the Lady Bedford
Epitaph on Himself
A Letter to the Lady Carey, and Mistress Essex Rich, from Amiens
To the Countess of Huntingdon
To the Countess of Huntingdon
To the Countess of Salisbury

The Storm

To Mr Christopher Brooke
Thou which art I, ('tis nothing to be so)
Thou which art still thyself, by these shalt know
Part of our passage; and, a hand, or eye
By Hilliard drawn, is worth an history,
By a worse painter made; and (without pride)
When by thy judgement they are dignified,
My lines are such: 'tis the pre-eminence
Of friendship only to impute excellence.
England to whom we owe, what we be, and have,
Sad that her sons did seek a foreign grave
(For, Fate's, or Fortune's drifts none can soothsay,
Honour and misery have one face and way)
From out her pregnant entrails sighed a wind
Which at th' air's middle marble room did find
Such strong resistance, that itself it threw
Downward again; and so when it did view
How in the port, our fleet dear time did leese,
Withering like prisoners, which lie but for fees,
Mildly it kissed our sails, and, fresh and sweet,
As to a stomach starved, whose insides meet,
Meat comes, it came; and swole our sails, when we
So joyed, as Sara her swelling joyed to see.
But 'twas but so kind, as our countrymen,
Which bring friends one day's way, and leave them the
Then like two mighty kings, which dwelling far
Asunder, meet against a third to war,
The south and west winds joined, and, as they blew,
Waves like a rolling trench before them threw.
Sooner than you read this line, did the gale,
Like shot, not feared till felt, our sails assail;
And what at first was called a gust, the same
Hath now a storm's, anon a tempest's name.
Jonas, I pity thee, and curse those men,

Who when the storm raged most, did wake thee then;
Sleep is pain's easiest salve, and doth fulfil
All offices of death, except to kill.
But when I waked, I saw, that I saw not.
I, and the sun, which should teach me had forgot
East, west, day, night, and I could only say,
If the world had lasted, now it had been day.
Thousands our noises were, yet we 'mongst all
Could none by his right name, but thunder call:
Lightning was all our light, and it rained more
Than if the sun had drunk the sea before.
Some coffined in their cabins lie, equally
Grieved that they are not dead, and yet must die.
And as sin-burdened souls from graves will creep,
At the last day, some forth their cabins peep:
And tremblingly ask what news, and do hear so,
Like jealous husbands, what they would not know.
Some sitting on the hatches, would seem there,
With hideous gazing to fear away fear.
Then note they the ship's sicknesses, the mast
Shaked with this ague, and the hold and waist
With a salt dropsy clogged, and all our tacklings
Snapping, like too high stretched treble strings.
And from our tottered sails, rags drop down so,
As from one hanged in chains, a year ago.
Even our ordnance placed for our defence,
Strive to break loose, and 'scape away from thence.
Pumping hath tired our men, and what's the gain?
Seas into seas thrown, we suck in again;
Hearing hath deafed our sailors; and if they
Knew how to hear, there's none knows what to say.
Compared to these storms, death is but a qualm,
Hell somewhat lightsome, and the Bermuda calm.
Darkness, light's elder brother, his birth-right
Claims o'er this world, and to heaven hath chased light.
All things are one, and that one none can be,
Since all forms, uniform deformity

Doth cover, so that we, except God say
Another *Fiat,* shall have no more day.
So violent, yet long these furies be,
That though thine absence starve me, I wish not thee.

The Calm

Our storm is past, and that storm's tyrannous rage,
A stupid calm, but nothing it, doth 'suage.
The fable is inverted, and far more
A block afflicts, now, than a stork before.
Storms chafe, and soon wear out themselves, or us;
In calms, heaven laughs to see us languish thus.
As steady as I can wish, that my thoughts were,
Smooth as thy mistress' glass, or what shines there,
The sea is now. And, as those Isles which we
Seek, when we can move, our ships rooted be.
As water did in storms, now pitch runs out
As lead, when a fired church becomes one spout.
And all our beauty, and our trim, decays,
Like courts removing, or like ended plays.
The fighting place now seamen's rags supply;
And all the tackling is a frippery.
No use of lanthorns; and in one place lay
Feathers and dust, today and yesterday.
Earth's hollownesses, which the world's lungs are,
Have no more wind than the upper vault of air.
We can nor lost friends, nor sought foes recover,
But meteor-like, save that we move not, hover.
Only the calenture together draws
Dear friends, which meet dead in great fishes' jaws:
And on the hatches as on altars lies
Each one, his own priest, and own sacrifice.
Who live, that miracle do multiply
Where walkers in hot ovens, do not die.
If in despite of these, we swim, that hath
No more refreshing, than our brimstone bath,
But from the sea, into the ship we turn,
Like parboiled wretches, on the coals to burn.
Like Bajazet encaged, the shepherd's scoff,
Or like slack-sinewed Samson, his hair off,

Languish our ships. Now, as a myriad
Of ants, durst th' Emperor's loved snake invade,
The crawling galleys, sea-gaols, finny chips,
Might brave our pinnaces, now bed-rid ships.
Whether a rotten state, and hope of gain,
Or, to disuse me from the queasy pain
Of being beloved, and loving, or the thirst
Of honour, or fair death, out pushed me first,
I lose my end: for here as well as I
A desperate may live, and a coward die.
Stag, dog, and all which from, or towards flies,
Is paid with life, or prey, or doing dies.
Fate grudges us all, and doth subtly lay
A scourge, 'gainst which we all forget to pray,
He that at sea prays for more wind, as well
Under the poles may beg cold, heat in hell.
What are we then? How little more alas
Is man now, than before he was! he was
Nothing; for us, we are for nothing fit;
Chance, or ourselves still disproportion it.
We have no power, no will, no sense; I lie,
I should not then thus feel this misery.

To Mr B. B.

Is not thy sacred hunger of science
Yet satisfied? Is not thy brain's rich hive
Fulfilled with honey which thou dost derive
From the arts' spirits and their quintessence?
Then wean thyself at last, and thee withdraw
From Cambridge thy old nurse, and, as the rest,
Here toughly chew, and sturdily digest
Th' immense vast volumes of our common law;
And begin soon, lest my grief grieve thee too,
Which is, that that which I should have begun
In my youth's morning, now late must be done;
And I as giddy travellers must do,
Which stray or sleep all day, and having lost
Light and strength, dark and tired must then ride post.
If thou unto thy Muse be married,
Embrace her ever, ever multiply,
Be far from me that strange adultery
To tempt thee and procure her widowhead.
My Muse (for I had one,) because I am cold,
Divorced herself: the cause being in me,
That I can take no new in bigamy,
Not my will only but power doth withhold.
Hence comes it, that these rhymes which never had
Mother, want matter, and they only have
A little form, the which their father gave;
They are profane, imperfect, oh, too bad
To be counted children of poetry
Except confirmed and bishoped by thee.

To Mr C. B.

Thy friend, whom thy deserts to thee enchain,
Urged by this inexcusable occasion,
Thee and the saint of his affection
Leaving behind, doth of both wants complain;
And let the love I bear to both sustain
No blot nor maim by this division,
Strong is this love which ties our hearts in one,
And strong that love pursued with amorous pain;
But though besides thyself I leave behind
Heaven's liberal, and earth's thrice-fairer sun,
Going to where stern winter aye doth won,
Yet, love's hot fires, which martyr my sad mind,
Do send forth scalding sighs, which have the art
To melt all ice, but that which walls her heart.

To Mr S. B.

O thou which to search out the secret parts
Of the India, or rather paradise
Of knowledge, hast with courage and advice
Lately launched into the vast sea of arts,
Disdain not in thy constant travailing
To do as other voyagers, and make
Some turns into less creeks, and wisely take
Fresh water at the Heliconian spring;
I sing not, siren like, to tempt; for I
Am harsh; nor as those schismatics with you,
Which draw all wits of good hope to their crew;
But seeing in you bright sparks of poetry,
I, though I brought no fuel, had desire
With these articulate blasts to blow the fire.

To Mr E. G.

Even as lame things thirst their perfection, so
The slimy rhymes bred in our vale below,
Bearing with them much of my love and heart,
Fly unto that Parnassus, where thou art.
There thou o'erseest London: here I have been
By staying in London too much overseen.
Now pleasure's dearth our city doth possess,
Our theatres are filled with emptiness;
As lank and thin is every street and way
As a woman delivered yesterday.
Nothing whereat to laugh my spleen espies
But bearbaitings or law exercise.
Therefore I'll leave it, and in the country strive
Pleasure, now fled from London, to retrieve.
Do thou so too: and fill not like a bee
Thy thighs with honey, but as plenteously
As Russian merchants, thyself's whole vessel load,
And then at winter retail it here abroad.
Bless us with Suffolk's sweets; and as that is
Thy garden, make thy hive and warehouse this.

To Mr I. L.

Blessed are your north parts, for all this long time
My sun is with you, cold and dark is our clime;
Heaven's sun, which stayed so long from us this year,
Stayed in your north (I think) for she was there,
And hither by kind nature drawn from thence,
Here rages, chafes and threatens pestilence;
Yet I, as long as she from hence doth stay,
Think this no south, no summer, nor no day.
With thee my kind and unkind heart is run,
There sacrifice it to that beauteous sun:
And since thou art in paradise and needst crave
No joy's addition, help thy friend to save.
So may thy pastures with their flowery feasts,
As suddenly as lard, fat thy lean beasts;
So may thy woods oft polled, yet ever wear
A green, and when thee list, a golden hair;
So may all thy sheep bring forth twins; and so
In chase and race may thy horse all outgo;
So may thy love and courage ne'er be cold;
Thy son ne'er ward; thy loved wife ne'er seem old;
But mayst thou wish great things, and them attain,
As thou tell'st her, and none but her my pain.

To Mr I. L.

Of that short roll of friends writ in my heart
Which with thy name begins, since their depart,
Whether in the English Provinces they be,
Or drink of Po, Sequan, or Danuby,
There 's none that sometimes greets us not, and yet
Your Trent is Lethe; that past, us you forget.
You do not duties of societies,
If from the embrace of a loved wife you rise,
View your fat beasts, stretched barns, and laboured fields,
Eat, play, ride, take all joys which all day yields,
And then again to your embracements go:
Some hours on us your friends, and some bestow
Upon your Muse, else both we shall repent,
I that my love, she that her gifts on you are spent.

To Mr R. W.

If, as mine is, thy life a slumber be,
Seem, when thou read'st these lines, to dream of me,
Never did Morpheus nor his brother wear
Shapes so like those shapes, whom they would appear,
As this my letter is like me, for it
Hath my name, words, hand, feet, heart, mind and wit;
It is my deed of gift of me to thee,
It is my will, myself the legacy.
So thy retirings I love, yea envy,
Bred in thee by a wise melancholy,
That I rejoice, that unto where thou art,
Though I stay here, I can thus send my heart,
As kindly as any enamoured patient
His picture to his absent love hath sent.
All news I think sooner reach thee than me;
Havens are heavens, and ships winged angels be,
The which both gospel, and stern threatenings bring;
Guiana's harvest is nipped in the spring,
I fear; and with us (methinks) Fate deals so
As with the Jews' guide God did; he did show
Him the rich land, but barred his entry in:
Oh, slowness is our punishment and sin.
Perchance, these Spanish business being done,
Which as the earth between the moon and sun
Eclipse the light which Guiana would give,
Our discontinued hopes we shall retrieve:
But if (as all th' all must) hopes smoke away,
Is not almighty virtue an India?
If men be worlds, there is in every one
Something to answer in some proportion
All the world's riches: and in good men, this
Virtue, our form's form and our soul's soul, is.

To Mr R. W.

Kindly I envy thy song's perfection
Built of all th' elements as our bodies are:
That little of earth that'is in it, is a fair
Delicious garden where all sweets are sown.
In it is cherishing fire which dries in me
Grief which did drown me: and half quenched by it
Are satiric fires which urged me to have writ
In scorn of all: for now I admire thee.
And as air doth fulfil the hollowness
Of rotten walls; so it mine emptiness,
Where tossed and moved it did beget this sound
Which as a lame echo of thine doth rebound.
Oh, I was dead; but since thy song new life did give,
I recreated even by thy creature live.

To Mr R. W.

Muse not that by thy mind thy body is led:
For by thy mind, my mind's distempered.
So thy care lives long, for I bearing part
It eats not only thine, by my swoll'n heart.
And when it gives us intermission
We take new hearts for it to feed upon.
But as a lay man's genius doth control
Body and mind; the Muse being the soul's soul
Of poets, that methinks should ease our anguish,
Although our bodies wither and minds languish.
Write then, that my griefs which thine got may be
Cured by thy charming sovereign melody.

To Mr R. W.

Zealously my Muse doth salute all thee
Inquiring of that mystic trinity
Whereof thou and all to whom heavens do infuse
Like fire, are made; thy body, mind, and Muse.
Dost thou recover sickness, or prevent?
Or is thy mind travailed with discontent?
Or art thou parted from the world and me,
In a good scorn of the world's vanity?
Or is thy devout Muse retired to sing
Upon her tender elegiac string?
Our minds part not, join then thy Muse with mine
For mine is barren thus divorced from thine.

To Mr Roland Woodward

Like one who in her third widowhood doth profess
Herself a nun, tied to retiredness,
So affects my Muse now, a chaste fallowness,
Since she to few, yet to too many hath shown
How love-song weeds, and satiric thorns are grown
Where seeds of better arts, were early sown.
Though to use, and love poetry, to me,
Betrothed to no one art, be no adultery;
Omissions of good, ill, as ill deeds be.
For though to us it seem, and be light and thin,
Yet in those faithful scales, where God throws in
Men's works, vanity weighs as much as sin.
If our souls have stained their first white, yet we
May clothe them with faith, and dear honesty,
Which God imputes, as native purity.
There is no virtue, but religion:
Wise, valiant, sober, just, are names, which none
Want, which want not vice-covering discretion.
Seek we then ourselves in ourselves; for as
Men force the sun with much more force to pass,
By gathering his beams with a crystal glass;
So we, if we into ourselves will turn,
Blowing our sparks of virtue, may outburn
The straw, which doth about our hearts sojourn.
You know, physicians, when they would infuse
Into any oil, the soul of simples, use
Places, where they may lie still warm, to choose.
So works retiredness in us; to roam
Giddily, and be everywhere, but at home,
Such freedom doth a banishment become.
We are but farmers of our selves, yet may,
If we can stock our selves, and thrive, uplay
Much, much dear treasure for the great rent day.
Manure thy self then, to thy self be approved,

And with vain outward things be no more moved,
But to know, that I love thee and would be loved.

To Mr T. W.

All hail, sweet poet, more full of more strong fire,
Than hath or shall enkindle any spirit,
I loved what nature gave thee, but this merit
Of wit and art I love not but admire;
Who have before or shall write after thee,
Their works, though toughly laboured, will be
Like infancy or age to man's firm stay,
Or early and late twilights to midday.
Men say, and truly, that they better be
Which be envied than pitied: therefore I,
Because I wish thee best, do thee envy:
O wouldst thou, by like reason, pity me,
But care not for me, I, that ever was
In Nature's, and in Fortune's gifts, (alas,
Before thy grace got in the Muses' school)
A monster and a beggar, am now a fool.
Oh how I grieve, that late born modesty
Hath got such root in easy waxen hearts,
That men may not themselves, their own good parts
Extol, without suspect of surquedry,
For, but thyself, no subject can be found
Worthy thy quill, nor any quill resound
Thy worth but thine; how good it were to see
A poem in thy praise, and writ by thee.
Now if this song be too harsh for rhyme, yet, as
The painters' bad god made a good devil,
'Twill be good prose, although the verse be evil,
If thou forget the rhyme as thou dost pass.
Then write, that I may follow, and so be
Thy debtor, thy echo, thy foil, thy zany.
I shall be thought, if mine like thine I shape,
All the world's lion, though I be thy ape.

To Mr T. W.

At once, from hence, my lines and I depart,
I to my soft still walks, they to my heart;
I to the nurse, they to the child of art;
Yet as a firm house, though the carpenter
Perish, doth stand: as an ambassador
Lies safe, howe'er his king be in danger:
So, though I languish, pressed with melancholy,
My verse, the strict map of my misery,
Shall live to see that, for whose want I die.
Therefore I envy them, and do repent,
That from unhappy me, things happy are sent;
Yet as a picture, or bare sacrament,
Accept these lines, and if in them there be
Merit of love, bestow that love on me.

To Mr T. W.

Haste thee harsh verse as fast as thy lame measure
Will give thee leave, to him, my pain and pleasure.
I have given thee, and yet thou art too weak,
Feet, and a reasoning soul and tongue to speak.
Plead for me, and so by thine and my labour,
I am thy Creator, thou my Saviour.
Tell him, all questions, which men have defended
Both of the place and pains of hell, are ended;
And 'tis decreed our hell is but privation
Of him, at least in this earth's habitation:
And 'tis where I am, where in every street
Infections follow, overtake, and meet:
Live I or die, by you my love is sent,
And you'are my pawns, or else my testament.

To Mr T. W.

Pregnant again with th' old twins hope, and fear,
Oft have I asked for thee, both how and where
Thou wert, and what my hopes of letters were;
As in the streets sly beggars narrowly
Watch motions of the giver's hand and eye,
And evermore conceive some hope thereby.
And now thy alms is given, thy letter is read,
The body risen again, the which was dead,
And thy poor starveling bountifully fed.
After this banquet my soul doth say grace,
And praise thee for it, and zealously embrace
Thy love, though I think thy love in this case
To be as gluttons, which say 'midst their meat,
They love that best of which they most do eat.

To Sir Henry Goodyer

Who makes the past, a pattern for next year,
Turns no new leaf, but still the same things reads,
Seen things, he sees again, heard things doth hear,
And makes his life but like a pair of beads.
A palace, when 'tis that, which it should be,
Leaves growing, and stands such, or else decays:
But he, which dwells there, is not so; for he
Strives to urge upward, and his fortune raise;
So had your body her morning, hath her noon,
And shall not better; her next change is night:
But her fair larger guest, to whom sun and moon
Are sparks, and short-lived, claims another right.
The noble soul by age grows lustier,
Her appetite and her digestion mend,
We must not starve, nor hope to pamper her
With women's milk, and pap unto the end.
Provide you manlier diet; you have seen
All libraries, which are schools, camps, and courts;
But ask your garners if you have not been
In harvests, too indulgent to your sports.
Would you redeem it? then yourself transplant
A while from hence. Perchance outlandish ground
Bears no more wit, than ours, but yet more scant
Are those diversions there, which here abound.
To be a stranger hath that benefit,
We can beginnings, but not habits choke.
Go; whither? Hence; you get, if you forget;
New faults, till they prescribe in us, are smoke.
Our soul, whose country's heaven, and God her father,
Into this world, corruption's sink, is sent,
Yet, so much in her travail she doth gather,
That she returns home, wiser than she went;
It pays you well, if it teach you to spare,
And make you ashamed, to make your hawk's praise yours,

Which when herself she lessens in the air,
You then first say, that high enough she towers.
However, keep the lively taste you hold
Of God, love him as now, but fear him more,
And in your afternoons think what you told
And promised him, at morning prayer before.
Let falsehood like a discord anger you,
Else be not froward. But why do I touch
Things, of which none is in your practice new,
And fables, or fruit-trenchers teach as much;
But thus I make you keep your promise Sir,
Riding I had you, though you still stayed there,
And in these thoughts, although you never stir,
You came with me to Mitcham, and are here.

A Letter Written by Sir H. G. and J. D. alternis vicibus

Since every tree begins to blossom now
Perfuming and enamelling each bough,
Hearts should as well as they, some fruits allow.
For since one old poor sun serves all the rest,
You several suns that warm, and light each breast
Do by that influence all your thoughts digest.
And that you two may so your virtues move,
On better matter than beams from above,
Thus our twin'd souls send forth these buds of love.
As in devotions men join both their hands,
We make ours do one act, to seal the bands,
By which we enthral ourselves to your commands.
And each for other's faith and zeal stand bound;
As safe as spirits are from any wound,
So free from impure thoughts they shall be found.
Admit our magic then by which we do
Make you appear to us, and us to you,
Supplying all the Muses in you two.
We do consider no flower that is sweet,
But we your breath in that exhaling meet,
And as true types of you, them humbly greet.
Here in our nightingales, we hear you sing,
Who so do make the whole year through a spring,
And save us from the fear of autumn's sting.
In Anker's calm face we your smoothness see,
Your minds unmingled, and as clear as she
That keeps untouched her first virginity.
Did all St Edith' Nuns descend again
To honour Polesworth with their cloistered train,
Compared with you each would confess some stain.
Or should we more bleed out our thoughts in ink,
No paper (though it would be glad to drink
Those drops) could comprehend what we do think.

For 'twere in us ambition to write
So, that because we two, you two unite,
Our letter should as you, be infinite.

To Sir Henry Wotton

Here's no more news, than virtue, I may as well
Tell you Cadiz' or Saint Michael's tale for news, as tell
That vice doth here habitually dwell.
Yet, as to get stomachs, we walk up and down,
And toil to sweeten rest, so, may God frown,
If, but to loathe both, I haunt Court, or Town.
For here no one is from th' extremity
Of vice, by any other reason free,
But that the next to him, still, is worse than he.
In this world's warfare, they whom rugged Fate,
(God's commissary,) doth so throughly hate,
As in the Court's squadron to marshal their state
If they stand armed with silly honesty,
With wishing prayers, and neat integrity,
Like Indian 'gainst Spanish hosts they be.
Suspicious boldness to this place belongs,
And to have as many ears as all have tongues;
Tender to know, tough to acknowledge wrongs.
Believe me Sir, in my youth's giddiest days,
When to be like the Court, was a play's praise,
Plays were not so like Courts, as Courts are like plays.
Then let us at these mimic antics jest,
Whose deepest projects, and egregious gests
Are but dull morals of a game at chests.
But now 'tis incongruity to smile,
Therefore I end; and bid farewell a while,
At Court, though from Court, were the better style.

To Sir Henry Wotton

Sir, more than kisses, letters mingle souls;
For, thus friends absent speak. This ease controls
The tediousness of my life: but for these
I could ideate nothing, which could please,
But I should wither in one day, and pass
To a bottle of hay, that am a lock of grass.
Life is a voyage, and in our life's ways
Countries, courts, towns are rocks, or remoras;
They break or stop all ships, yet our state's such,
That though than pitch they stain worse, we must touch.
If in the furnace of the even line,
Or under th' adverse icy poles thou pine,
Thou know'st two temperate regions girded in,
Dwell there: But Oh, what refuge canst thou win
Parched in the Court, and in the country frozen?
Shall cities, built of both extremes, be chosen?
Can dung and garlic be a perfume? or can
A scorpion and torpedo cure a man?
Cities are worst of all three; of all three
(O knotty riddle) each is worst equally.
Cities are sepulchres; they who dwell there
Are carcases, as if no such there were.
And Courts are theatres, where some men play
Princes, some slaves, all to one end, and of one clay.
The country is a desert, where no good,
Gained (as habits, not born,) is understood.
There men become beasts, and prone to more evils;
In cities blocks, and in a lewd Court, devils.
As in the first Chaos confusedly
Each element's qualities were in the other three;
So pride, lust, covetize, being several
To these three places, yet all are in all,
And mingled thus, their issue incestuous.
Falsehood is denizened. Virtue is barbarous.

Let no man say there, »Virtue's flinty wall
Shall lock vice in me, I'll do none, but know all.«
Men are sponges, which to pour out, receive,
Who know false play, rather than lose, deceive.
For in best understandings, sin began,
Angels sinned first, then devils, and then man.
Only perchance beasts sin not; wretched we
Are beasts in all, but white integrity.
I think if men, which in these places live
Durst look for themselves, and themselves retrieve,
They would like strangers greet themselves, seeing then
Utopian youth, grown old Italian.
Be then thine own home, and in thyself dwell;
Inn anywhere, continuance maketh hell.
And seeing the snail, which everywhere doth roam,
Carrying his own house still, still is at home,
Follow (for he is easy paced) this snail,
Be thine own palace, or the world 's thy goal.
And in the world's sea, do not like cork sleep
Upon the water's face; nor in the deep
Sink like a lead without a line: but as
Fishes glide, leaving no print where they pass,
Nor making sound, so closely thy course go,
Let men dispute, whether thou breathe, or no.
Only in this one thing, be no Galenist: to make
Courts' hot ambitions wholesome, do not take
A dram of country's dullness; do not add
Correctives, but as chemics, purge the bad.
But, Sir, I advise not you, I rather do
Say o'er those lessons, which I learned of you:
Whom, free from German schisms, and lightness
Of France, and fair Italy's faithlessness,
Having from these sucked all they had of worth,
And brought home that faith, which you carried forth,
I throughly love. But if myself, I have won
To know my rules, I have, and you have
Donne.

To Sir Henry Wotton, at his going Ambassador to Venice

After those reverend papers, whose soul is
Our good and great King's loved hand and feared name,
By which to you he derives much of his,
And (how he may) makes you almost the same,
A taper of his torch, a copy writ
From his original, and a fair beam
Of the same warm, and dazzling sun, though it
Must in another sphere his virtue stream:
After those learned papers which your hand
Hath stored with notes of use and pleasure too,
From which rich treasury you may command
Fit matter whether you will write or do:
After those loving papers, where friends send
With glad grief, to your sea-ward steps, farewell,
Which thicken on you now, as prayers ascend
To heaven in troops at a good man's passing bell:
Admit this honest paper, and allow
It such an audience as yourself would ask;
What you must say at Venice this means now,
And hath for nature, what you have for task.
To swear much love, not to be changed before
Honour alone will to your fortune fit;
Nor shall I then honour your fortune, more
Than I have done your honour wanting it.
But 'tis an easier load (though both oppress)
To want, than govern greatness, for we are
In that, our own and only business,
In this, we must for others' vices care;
'Tis therefore well your spirits now are placed
In their last furnace, in activity;
Which fits them (schools and Courts and wars o'erpast)
To touch and test in any best degree.
For me, (if there be such a thing as I)
Fortune (if there be such a thing as she)

Spies that I bear so well her tyranny,
That she thinks nothing else so fit for me;
But though she part us, to hear my oft prayers
For your increase, God is as near me here;
And to send you what I shall beg, his stairs
In length and ease are alike everywhere.

H. W. in Hibernia Belligeranti

Went you to conquer? and have so much lost
Yourself, that what in you was best and most,
Respective friendship, should so quickly die?
In public gain my share' is not such that I
Would lose your love for Ireland: better cheap
I pardon death (who though he do not reap
Yet gleans he many of our friends away)
Than that your waking mind should be a prey
To lethargies. Let shot, and bogs, and skeins
With bodies deal, as fate bids or restrains;
Ere sicknesses attack, young death is best,
Who pays before his death doth 'scape arrest.
Let not your soul (at first with graces filled,
And since, and thorough crooked limbecs, stilled
In many schools and Courts, which quicken it,)
Itself unto the Irish negligence submit.
I ask not laboured letters which should wear
Long papers out: nor letters which should fear
Dishonest carriage; or a seer's art,
Nor such as from the brain come, but the heart.

To Sir Edward Herbert, at Juliers

Man is a lump, where all beasts kneaded be,
Wisdom makes him an ark where all agree;
The fool, in whom these beasts do live at jar,
Is sport to others, and a theatre,
Nor 'scapes he so, but is himself their prey;
All which was man in him, is eat away,
And now his beasts on one another feed,
Yet couple in anger, and new monsters breed;
How happy is he, which hath due place assigned
To his beasts, and disafforested his mind!
Empaled himself to keep them out, not in;
Can sow, and dares trust corn, where they have been;
Can use his horse, goat, wolf, and every beast,
And is not ass himself to all the rest.
Else, man not only is the herd of swine,
But he's those devils too, which did incline
Them to a headlong rage, and made them worse:
For man can add weight to heaven's heaviest curse.
As souls (they say) by our first touch, take in
The poisonous tincture of original sin,
So, to the punishments which God doth fling,
Our apprehension contributes the sting.
To us, as to his chickens, he doth cast
Hemlock, and we as men, his hemlock taste.
We do infuse to what he meant for meat,
Corrosiveness, or intense cold or heat.
For, God no such specific poison hath
As kills we know not how; his fiercest wrath
Hath no antipathy, but may be good
At least for physic, if not for our food.
Thus man, that might be his pleasure, is his rod,
And is his devil, that might be his God.
Since then our business is, to rectify
Nature, to what she was, we are led awry

By them, who man to us in little show,
Greater than due, no form we can bestow
On him; for man into himself can draw
All, all his faith can swallow, or reason chaw.
All that is filled, and all that which doth fill,
All the round world, to man is but a pill;
In all it works not, but it is in all
Poisonous, or purgative, or cordial,
For, knowledge kindles calentures in some,
And is to others icy opium.
As brave as true, is that profession then
Which you do use to make; that you know man.
This makes it credible, you have dwelt upon
All worthy books, and now are such a one.
Actions are authors, and of those in you
Your friends find every day a mart of new.

To Mrs M. H. (Mad paper stay)

Mad paper stay, and grudge not here to burn
With all those sons whom my brain did create,
At least lie hid with me, till thou return
To rags again, which is thy native state.
What though thou have enough unworthiness
To come unto great place as others do,
That's much; emboldens, pulls, thrusts I confess,
But 'tis not all, thou shouldst be wicked too.
And, that thou canst not learn, or not of me;
Yet thou wilt go; go, since thou goest to her
Who lacks but faults to be a prince, for she,
Truth, whom they dare not pardon, dares prefer.
But when thou com'st to that perplexing eye
Which equally claims love and reverence,
Thou wilt not long dispute it, thou wilt die;
And, having little now, have then no sense.
Yet when her warm redeeming hand, which is
A miracle; and made such to work more,
Doth touch thee, sapless leaf, thou grow'st by this
Her creature; glorified more than before.
Then as a mother which delights to hear
Her early child mis-speak half-uttered words,
Or, because majesty doth never fear
Ill or bold speech, she audience affords.
And then, cold speechless wretch, thou diest again,
And wisely; what discourse is left for thee?
From speech of ill, and her thou must abstain,
And is there any good which is not she?
Yet mayst thou praise her servants, though not her,
And wit, and virtue, and honour her attend,
And since they are but her clothes, thou shalt not err
If thou her shape and beauty and grace commend.
Who knows thy destiny? when thou hast done,
Perchance her cabinet may harbour thee,

Whither all noble ambitious wits do run,
A nest almost as full of good as she.
When thou art there, if any, whom we know,
Were saved before, and did that heaven partake,
When she revolves his papers, mark what show
Of favour, she, alone, to them doth make.
Mark, if to get them, she o'erskip the rest,
Mark, if she read them twice, or kiss the name;
Mark, if she do the same that they protest,
Mark, if she mark whether her woman came.
Mark, if slight things be objected, and o'erblown.
Mark, if her oaths against him be not still
Reserved, and that she grieves she's not her own,
And chides the doctrine that denies freewill.
I bid thee not do this to be my spy;
Nor to make myself her familiar;
But so much I do love her choice, that I
Would fain love him that shall be loved of her.

To the Countess of Bedford at New Year's Tide

This twilight of two years, not past nor next,
Some emblem is of me, or I of this,
Who (meteor-like, of stuff and form perplexed,
Whose what, and where, in disputation is,)
If I should call me anything, should miss.
I sum the years, and me, and find me not
Debtor to th' old, nor creditor to the new,
That cannot say, my thanks I have forgot,
Nor trust I this with hopes, and yet scarce true
This bravery is, since these times showed me you.
In recompense I would show future times
What you were, and teach them to urge towards such,
Verse embalms virtue; and tombs, or thrones of rhymes,
Preserve frail transitory fame, as much
As spice doth bodies from corrupt air's touch.
Mine are short-lived; the tincture of your name
Creates in them, but dissipates as fast
New spirits; for, strong agents with the same
Force that doth warm and cherish, us do waste;
Kept hot with strong extracts, no bodies last:
So, my verse built of your just praise, might want
Reason and likelihood, the firmest base,
And made of miracle, now faith is scant,
Will vanish soon, and so possess no place,
And you, and it, too much grace might disgrace.
When all (as truth commands assent) confess
All truth of you, yet they will doubt how I
One corn of one low anthill's dust, and less,
Should name, know, or express a thing so high,
And not an inch, measure infinity.
I cannot tell them, nor myself, nor you,
But leave, lest truth be endangered by my praise,
And turn to God, who knows I think this true,
And useth oft, when such a heart mis-says,

To make it good, for, such a praiser prays.
He will best teach you, how you should lay out
His stock of beauty, learning, favour, blood,
He will perplex security with doubt,
And clear those doubts, hide from you, and show you good,
And so increase your appetite and food;
He will teach you, that good and bad have not
One latitude in cloisters, and in Court,
Indifferent there the greatest space hath got,
Some pity is not good there, some vain disport,
On this side sin, with that place may comport.
Yet he, as he bounds seas, will fix your hours,
Which pleasure, and delight may not ingress,
And though what none else lost, be truliest yours,
He will make you, what you did not, possess,
By using others', not vice, but weakness.
He will make you speak truths, and credibly,
And make you doubt, that others do not so:
He will provide you keys, and locks, to spy,
And 'scape spies, to good ends, and he will show
What you may not acknowledge, what not know.
For your own conscience, he gives innocence,
But for your fame, a discreet wariness,
And though to 'scape, than to revenge offence
Be better, he shows both, and to repress
Joy, when your state swells, sadness when 'tis less.
From need of tears he will defend your soul,
Or make a rebaptizing of one tear;
He cannot, (that's, he will not) dis-enrol
Your name; and when with active joy we hear
This private gospel, then 'tis our New Year.

To the Countess of Bedford

Honour is so sublime perfection,
And so refined; that when God was alone
And creatureless at first, himself had none;
But as of the elements, these which we tread,
Produce all things with which we'are joyed or fed,
And, those are barren both above our head:
So from low persons doth all honour flow;
Kings, whom they would have honoured, to us show,
And but direct our honour, not bestow.
For when from herbs the pure parts must be won
From gross, by stilling, this is better done
By despised dung, than by the fire or sun.
Care not then, Madam, how low your praisers lie;
In labourers' ballad, oft more piety
God finds, than in *Te Deum* 's melody.
And, ordnance raised on towers so many mile
Send not their voice, nor last so long a while
As fires from th' earth's low vaults in Sicil Isle.
Should I say I lived darker than were true,
Your radiation can all clouds subdue;
But one, 'tis best light to contemplate you.
You, for whose body God made better clay,
Or took soul's stuff such as shall late decay,
Or such as needs small change at the last day.
This, as an amber drop enwraps a bee,
Covering discovers your quick soul; that we
May in your through-shine front your heart's thoughts see.
You teach (though we learn not) a thing unknown
To our late times, the use of specular stone,
Through which all things within without were shown.
Of such were temples; so and of such you are;
Being and seeming is your equal care,
And virtue's whole sum is but know and dare.
But as our souls of growth and souls of sense

Have birthright of our reason's soul, yet hence
They fly not from that, nor seek precedence:
Nature's first lesson, so, discretion,
Must not grudge zeal a place, nor yet keep none,
Not banish itself, nor religion.
Discretion is a wiseman's soul, and so
Religion is a Christian's, and you know
How these are one, her *yea*, is not her *no.*
Nor may we hope to solder still and knit
These two, and dare to break them; nor must wit
Be colleague to religion, but be it.
In those poor types of God (round circles) so
Religions' types, the pieceless centres flow,
And are in all the lines which all ways go.
If either ever wrought in you alone
Or principally, then religion
Wrought your ends, and your ways discretion.
Go thither still, go the same way you went,
Who so would change, do covet or repent;
Neither can reach you, great and innocent.

To the Countess of Bedford

Madam,
Reason is our soul's left hand, Faith her right,
By these we reach divinity, that's you;
Their loves, who have the blessing of your sight,
Grew from their reason, mine from fair faith grew.
But as, although a squint lefthandedness
Be ungracious, yet we cannot want that hand,
So would I, not to increase, but to express
My faith, as I believe, so understand.
Therefore I study you first in your Saints,
Those friends, whom your election glorifies,
Then in your deeds, accesses, and restraints,
And what you read, and what yourself devise.
But soon, the reasons why you are loved by all,
Grow infinite, and so pass reason's reach,
Then back again to implicit faith I fall,
And rest on what the catholic voice doth teach;
That you are good: and not one heretic
Denies it: if he did, yet you are so.
For, rocks, which high-topped and deep-rooted stick,
Waves wash, not undermine, nor overthrow.
In everything there naturally grows
A balsamum to keep it fresh, and new,
If 'twere not injured by extrinsic blows;
Your birth and beauty are this balm in you.
But you of learning and religion,
And virtue, and such ingredients, have made
A mithridate, whose operation
Keeps off, or cures what can be done or said.
Yet, this is not your physic, but your food,
A diet fit for you; for you are here
The first good angel, since the world's frame stood,
That ever did in woman's shape appear.
Since you are then God's masterpiece, and so

His factor for our loves; do as you do,
Make your return home gracious; and bestow
This life on that; so make one life of two.
For so God help me, I would not miss you there
For all the good which you can do me here.

To the Countess of Bedford

Begun in France but Never Perfected
Though I be dead, and buried, yet I have
(Living in you,) Court enough in my grave,
As oft as there I think myself to be,
So many resurrections waken me.
That thankfulness your favours have begot
In me, embalms me, that I do not rot.
This season as 'tis Easter, as 'tis spring,
Must both to growth and to confession bring
My thoughts disposed unto your influence, so,
These verses bud, so these confessions grow;
First I confess I have to others lent
Your stock, and over prodigally spent
Your treasure, for since I had never known
Virtue or beauty, but as they are grown
In you, I should not think or say they shine,
(So as I have) in any other mine;
Next I confess this my confession,
For, 'tis some fault thus much to touch upon
Your praise to you, where half rights seem too much,
And make your mind's sincere complexion blush.
Next I confess my impenitence, for I
Can scarce repent my first fault, since thereby
Remote low spirits, which shall ne'er read you,
May in less lessons find enough to do,
By studying copies, not originals,
Desunt caetera.

To the Countess of Bedford

To have written then, when you writ, seemed to me
Worst of spiritual vices, simony,
And not to have written then, seems little less
Than worst of civil vices, thanklessness.
In this, my debt I seemed loth to confess,
In that, I seemed to shun beholdingness.
But 'tis not so, nothings, as I am, may
Pay all they have, and yet have all to pay.
Such borrow in their payments, and owe more
By having leave to write so, than before.
Yet since rich mines in barren grounds are shown,
May not I yield (not gold) but coal or stone?
Temples were not demolished, though profane:
Here Peter Jove's, there Paul hath Dian's fane.
So whether my hymns you admit or choose,
In me you have hallowed a pagan Muse,
And denizened a stranger, who mistaught
By blamers of the times they marred, hath sought
Virtues in corners, which now bravely do
Shine in the world's best part, or all it; you.
I have been told, that virtue in courtiers' hearts
Suffers an ostracism, and departs.
Profit, ease, fitness, plenty, bid it go,
But whither, only knowing you, I know;
Your (or you) virtue, two vast uses serves,
It ransoms one sex, and one Court preserves;
There's nothing but your worth, which being true,
Is known to any other, not to you:
And you can never know it; to admit
No knowledge of your worth, is some of it.
But since to you, your praises discords be,
Stoop others' ills to meditate with me.
Oh! to confess we know not what we should,
Is half excuse; we know not what we would.

Lightness depresseth us, emptiness fills,
We sweat and faint, yet still go down the hills;
As new philosophy arrests the sun,
And bids the passive earth about it run,
So we have dulled our mind, it hath no ends;
Only the body's busy, and pretends;
As dead low earth eclipses and controls
The quick high moon: so doth the body, souls.
In none but us, are such mixed engines found,
As hands of double office: for, the ground
We till with them; and them to heaven we raise;
Who prayerless labours, or, without this, prays,
Doth but one half, that's none; he which said, *Plough*
And look not back, to look up doth allow.
Good seed degenerates, and oft obeys
The soil's disease, and into cockle strays.
Let the mind's thoughts be but transplanted so,
Into the body, and bastardly they grow.
What hate could hurt our bodies like our love?
We, but no foreign tyrants could, remove
These not engraved, but inborn dignities
Caskets of souls; temples, and palaces:
For, bodies shall from death redeemed be,
Souls but preserved, not naturally free.
As men to our prisons, new souls to us are sent,
Which learn vice there, and come in innocent.
First seeds of every creature are in us,
Whate'er the world hath bad, or precious,
Man's body can produce, hence hath it been
That stones, worms, frogs, and snakes in man are seen
But who e'er saw, though nature can work so,
That pearl, or gold, or corn in man did grow?
We' have added to the world Virginia, and sent
Two new stars lately to the firmament;
Why grudge we us (not heaven) the dignity
T' increase with ours, those fair souls' company?
But I must end this letter, though it do

Stand on two truths, neither is true to you.
Virtue hath some perverseness; for she will
Neither believe her good, nor others' ill.
Even in you, virtue's best paradise,
Virtue hath some, but wise degrees of vice.
Too many virtues, or too much of one
Begets in you unjust suspicion.
And ignorance of vice, makes virtue less,
Quenching compassion of our wretchedness.
But these are riddles; some aspersion
Of vice becomes well some complexion.
Statesmen purge vice with vice, and may corrode
The bad with bad, a spider with a toad:
For so, ill thralls not them, but they tame ill
And make her do much good against her will,
But in your commonwealth, or world in you,
Vice hath no office, or good work to do.
Take then no vicious purge, but be content
With cordial virtue, your known nourishment.

To the Countess of Bedford

Madam,
You have refined me, and to worthiest things
(Virtue, art, beauty, fortune,) now I see
Rareness, or use, not nature value brings;
And such, as they are circumstanced, they be.
Two ills can ne'er perplex us, sin to excuse;
But of two good things, we may leave and choose.
Therefore at Court, which is not virtue's clime,
(Where a transcendent height, (as, lowness me)
Makes her not be, or not show) all my rhyme
Your virtues challenge, which there rarest be;
For, as dark texts need notes: there some must be
To usher virtue, and say, *This is she.*
So in the country is beauty; to this place
You are the season (Madam) you the day,
'Tis but a grave of spices, till your face
Exhale them, and a thick close bud display.
Widowed and reclused else, her sweets she enshrines
As China, when the sun at Brazil dines.
Out from your chariot, morning breaks at night,
And falsifies both computations so;
Since a new world doth rise here from your light,
We your new creatures, by new reckonings go.
This shows that you from nature loathly stray,
That suffer not an artificial day.
In this you have made the Court the antipodes,
And willed your delegate, the vulgar sun,
To do profane autumnal offices,
Whilst here to you, we sacrificers run;
And whether priests, or organs, you we obey,
We sound your influence, and your dictates say.
Yet to that deity which dwells in you,
Your virtuous soul, I now not sacrifice;
These are petitions and not hymns; they sue

But that I may survey the edifice.
In all religions as much care hath been
Of temples' frames, and beauty, as rites within.
As all which go to Rome, do not thereby
Esteem religions, and hold fast the best,
But serve discourse, and curiosity,
With that which doth religion but invest,
And shun th' entangling labyrinths of schools,
And make it wit, to think the wiser fools:
So in this pilgrimage I would behold
You as you'are virtue's temple, not as she,
What walls of tender crystal her enfold,
What eyes, hands, bosom, her pure altars be;
And after this survey, oppose to all
Babblers of chapels, you th' Escurial.
Yet not as consecrate, but merely as fair,
On these I cast a lay and country eye.
Of past and future stories, which are rare,
I find you all record, all prophecy.
Purge but the book of Fate, that it admit
No sad nor guilty legends, you are it.
If good and lovely were not one, of both
You were the transcript, and original,
The elements, the parent, and the growth,
And every piece of you, is both their all:
So entire are all your deeds, and you, that you
Must do the same thing still; you cannot two.
But these (as nice thin school divinity
Serves heresy to further or repress)
Taste of poetic rage, or flattery,
And need not, where all hearts one truth profess;
Oft from new proofs, and new phrase, new doubts grow,
As strange attire aliens the men we know.
Leaving then busy praise, and all appeal
To higher courts, sense's decree is true,
The mine, the magazine, the commonweal,
The story of beauty, in Twicknam is, and you.

Who hath seen one, would both; as, who had been
In Paradise, would seek the cherubin.

To the Lady Bedford

You that are she and you, that's double she,
In her dead face, half of yourself shall see;
She was the other part, for so they do
Which build them friendships, become one of two;
So two, that but themselves no third can fit,
Which were to be so, when they were not yet.
Twins, though their birth Cusco, and Musco take,
As divers stars one constellation make,
Paired like two eyes, have equal motion, so
Both but one means to see, one way to go;
Had you died first, a carcase she had been;
And we your rich tomb in her face had seen;
She like the soul is gone, and you here stay,
Not a live friend; but th' other half of clay;
And since you act that part, as men say, »Here
Lies such a Prince«, when but one part is there,
And do all honour and devotion due
Unto the whole, so we all reverence you;
For such a friendship who would not adore
In you, who are all what both was before,
Not all, as if some perished by this,
But so, as all in you contracted is;
As of this all, though many parts decay,
The pure which elemented them shall stay;
And though diffused, and spread in infinite,
Shall recollect, and in one all unite:
So madam, as her soul to heaven is fled,
Her flesh rests in the earth, as in a bed;
Her virtues do, as to their proper sphere,
Return to dwell with you, of whom they were;
As perfect motions are all circular,
So they to you, their sea, whence less streams are;
She was all spices, you all metals; so
In you two we did both rich Indies know;

And as no fire, nor rust can spend or waste
One dram of gold, but what was first shall last,
Though it be forced in water, earth, salt, air,
Expansed in infinite, none will impair;
So, to yourself you may additions take,
But nothing can you less, or changed make.
Seek not in seeking new, to seem to doubt,
That you can match her, or not be without;
But let some faithful book in her room be,
Yet but of Judith no such book as she.

Epitaph on Himself

To the Countess of Bedford
Madam,
That I might make your cabinet my tomb,
And for my fame which I love next my soul,
Next to my soul provide the happiest room,
Admit to that place this last funeral scroll.
Others by wills give legacies, but I
Dying, of you do beg a legacy.
OMNIBUS
My fortune and my choice this custom break,
When we are speechless grown, to make stones speak,
Though no stone tell thee what I was, yet thou
In my grave's inside seest what thou art now:
Yet thou'art not yet so good, till death us lay
To ripe and mellow here, we are stubborn clay.
Parents make us earth, and souls dignify
Us to be glass; here to grow gold we lie.
Whilst in our souls sin bred and pampered is,
Our souls become worm-eaten carcases;
So we ourselves miraculously destroy.
Here bodies with less miracle enjoy
Such privileges, enabled here to scale
Heaven, when the trumpet's air shall them exhale.
Hear this, and mend thyself, and thou mend'st me,
By making me being dead, do good to thee,
And think me well composed, that I could now
A last-sick hour to syllables allow.

A Letter to the Lady Carey, and Mistress Essex Rich, from Amiens

Madame,
Here, where by all, all saints invoked are
T'were too much schism to be singular,
And 'gainst a practice general to war;
Yet, turning to saints, should my humility
To other saint, than you, directed be,
That were to make my schism heresy.
Nor would I be a convertite so cold
As not to tell it; if this be too bold,
Pardons are in this market cheaply sold.
Where, because faith is in too low degree,
I thought it some apostleship in me,
To speak things which by faith alone I see:
That is, of you; who are a firmament
Of virtues, where no one is grown, nor spent;
They'are your materials, not your ornament.
Others, whom we call virtuous, are not so
In their whole substance, but their virtues grow
But in their humours, and at seasons show.
For when through tasteless flat humility,
In dough-baked men, some harmlessness we see,
'Tis but his phlegm that's virtuous, and not he.
So is the blood sometimes; who ever ran
To danger unimportuned, he was then
No better than a sanguine virtuous man.
So cloistral men who in pretence of fear,
All contributions to this life forbear,
Have virtue in melancholy, and only there.
Spiritual choleric critics, which in all
Religions, find faults, and forgive no fall,
Have, through this zeal, virtue, but in their gall.
We'are thus but parcel-gilt; to gold we'are grown,
When virtue is our soul's complexion;

Who knows his virtue's name, or place, hath none.
Virtue is but aguish, when 'tis several;
By'occasion waked, and circumstantial;
True virtue is soul, always in all deeds all.
This virtue, thinking to give dignity
To your soul, found there no infirmity;
For your soul was as good virtue as she.
She therefore wrought upon that part of you,
Which is scarce less than soul, as she could do,
And so hath made your beauty virtue too;
Hence comes it, that your beauty wounds not hearts
As others, with profane and sensual darts,
But, as an influence, virtuous thoughts imparts.
But if such friends, by the'honour of your sight
Grow capable of this so great a light,
As to partake your virtues, and their might,
What must I think that influence must do,
Where it finds sympathy, and matter too,
Virtue, and beauty, of the same stuff, as you:
Which is, your noble worthy sister; she,
Of whom, if what in this my ecstasy
And revelation of you both, I see,
I should write here, as in short galleries
The master at the end large glasses ties,
So to present the room twice to our eyes,
So I should give this letter length, and say
That which I said of you, there is no way
From either, but by th' other, not to stray.
May therefore this be'enough to testify
My true devotion, free from flattery.
He that believes himself, doth never lie.
To the Honourable lady
the lady Carew.

To the Countess of Huntingdon

Madam,
Man to God's image, Eve, to man's was made,
Nor find we that God breathed a soul in her,
Canons will not Church functions you invade,
Nor laws to civil office you prefer.
Who vagrant transitory comets sees,
Wonders, because they are rare; but a new star
Whose motion with the firmament agrees,
Is miracle; for, there no new things are;
In woman so perchance mild innocence
A seldom comet is, but active good
A miracle, which reason 'scapes, and sense;
For, art and nature this in them withstood.
As such a star, the Magi led to view
The manger-cradled infant, God below:
By virtue's beams by fame derived from you,
May apt souls, and the worst may, virtue know.
If the world's age, and death be argued well
By the sun's fall, which now towards earth doth bend,
Then we might fear that virtue, since she fell
So low as woman, should be near her end.
But she's not stooped, but raised; exiled by men
She fled to heaven, that's heavenly things, that's you,
She was in all men, thinly scattered then,
But now amassed, contracted in a few.
She gilded us: but you are gold, and she;
Us she informed, but transubstantiates you;
Soft dispositions which ductile be,
Elixir-like, she makes not clean, but new.
Though you a wife's and mother's name retain,
'Tis not as woman, for all are not so,
But virtue having made you virtue, is fain
To adhere in these names, her and you to show,
Else, being alike pure, we should neither see,

As, water being into air rarefied,
Neither appear, till in one cloud they be,
So, for our sakes you do low names abide;
Taught by great constellations, which being framed
Of the most stars, take low names, Crab, and Bull,
When single planets by the gods are named,
You covet not great names, of great things full.
So you, as woman, one doth comprehend,
And in the veil of kindred others see;
To some ye are revealed, as in a friend,
And as a virtuous prince far off, to me.
To whom, because from you all virtues flow,
And 'tis not none, to dare contemplate you,
I, which do so, as your true subject owe
Some tribute for that, so these lines are due.
If you can think these flatteries, they are,
For then your judgement is below my praise,
If they were so, oft, flatteries work as far,
As counsels, and as far th' endeavour raise.
So my ill reaching you might there grow good,
But I remain a poisoned fountain still;
But not your beauty, virtue, knowledge, blood
Are more above all flattery, than my will.
And if I flatter any, 'tis not you
But my own judgement, who did long ago
Pronounce, that all these praises should be true,
And virtue should your beauty, and birth outgrow.
Now that my prophecies are all fulfilled,
Rather than God should not be honoured too,
And all these gifts confessed, which he instilled,
Yourself were bound to say that which I do.
So I, but your recorder am in this,
Or mouth, or speaker of the universe,
A ministerial notary, for 'tis
Not I, but you and fame, that make this verse;
I was your prophet in your younger days,
And now your chaplain, God in you to praise.

To the Countess of Huntingdon

That unripe side of earth, that heavy clime
That gives us man up now, like Adam's time
Before he ate; man's shape, that would yet be
(Knew they not it, and feared beasts' company)
So naked at this day, as though man there
From Paradise so great a distance were,
As yet the news could not arrived be
Of Adam's tasting the forbidden tree;
Deprived of that free state which they were in,
And wanting the reward, yet bear the sin.
But, as from extreme heights who downward looks,
Sees men at children's shapes, rivers at brooks,
And loseth younger forms; so, to your eye
These (Madam) that without your distance lie,
Must either mist, or nothing seem to be,
Who are at home but wit's mere *atomi.*
But, I who can behold them move, and stay,
Have found myself to you, just their midway;
And now must pity them; for, as they do
Seem sick to me, just so must I to you.
Yet neither will I vex your eyes to see
A sighing ode, nor cross-armed elegy.
I come not to call pity from your heart,
Like some white-livered dotard that would part
Else from his slippery soul with a faint groan,
And faithfully, (without you smiled) were gone.
I cannot feel the tempest of a frown,
I may be raised by love, but not thrown down.
Though I can pity those sigh twice a day,
I hate that thing whispers itself away.
Yet since all love is fever, who to trees
Doth talk, doth yet in love's cold ague freeze.
'Tis love, but, with such fatal weakness made,
That it destroys itself with its own shade.

Who first looked sad, grieved, pined, and showed his pain,
Was he that first taught women to disdain.
As all things were one nothing, dull and weak,
Until this raw disordered heap did break,
And several desires led parts away,
Water declined with earth, the air did stay,
Fire rose, and each from other but untied,
Themselves unprisoned were and purified;
So was love, first in vast confusion hid,
An unripe willingness which nothing did,
A thirst, an appetite which had no ease,
That found a want, but knew not what would please.
What pretty innocence in those days moved!
Man ignorantly walked by her he loved;
Both sighed and interchanged a speaking eye,
Both trembled and were sick, both knew not why.
That natural fearfulness that struck man dumb,
Might well (those times considered) man become.
As all discoverers whose first assay
Finds but the place, after, the nearest way:
So passion is to woman's love, about,
Nay, farther off, than when we first set out.
It is not love that sueth, or doth contend;
Love either conquers, or but meets a friend.
Man's better part consists of purer fire,
And finds itself allowed, ere it desire.
Love is wise here, keeps home, gives reason sway,
And journeys not till it find summer way.
A weather-beaten lover but once known,
Is sport for every girl to practise on.
Who strives through woman's scorns, women to know,
Is lost, and seeks his shadow to outgo;
It must be sickness, after one disdain,
Though he be called aloud, to look again.
Let others sigh, and grieve; one cunning sleight
Shall freeze my love to crystal in a night.
I can love first, and (if I win) love still;

And cannot be removed, unless she will.
It is her fault if I unsure remain,
She only can untie, and bind again.
The honesties of love with ease I do,
But am no porter for a tedious woo.
But (Madam) I now think on you; and here
Where we are at our heights, you but appear,
We are but clouds you rise from, our noon ray
But a foul shadow, not your break of day.
You are at first hand all that's fair and right,
And others' good reflects but back your light.
You are a perfectness, so curious hit,
That youngest flatteries do scandal it.
For, what is more doth what you are restrain,
And though beyond, is down the hill again.
We'have no next way to you, we cross to it:
You are the straight line, thing praised, attribute.
Each good in you 's a light; so many a shade
You make, and in them are your motions made.
These are your pictures to the life. From far
We see you move, and here your zanies are:
So that no fountain good there is, doth grow
In you, but our dim actions faintly show.
Then find I, if man's noblest part be love,
Your purest lustre must that shadow move.
The soul with body, is a heaven combined
With earth, and for man's ease, but nearer joined.
Where thoughts the stars of soul we understand,
We guess not their large natures, but command.
And love in you, that bounty is of light,
That gives to all, and yet hath infinite,
Whose heat doth force us thither to intend,
But soul we find too earthly to ascend,
'Till slow access hath made it wholly pure,
Able immortal clearness to endure.
Who dare aspire this journey with a stain,
Hath weight will force him headlong back again.

No more can impure man retain and move
In that pure region of a worthy love,
Than earthly substance can unforced aspire,
And leave his nature to converse with fire:
Such may have eye, and hand; may sigh, may speak;
But like swoll'n bubbles, when they are high'st they break.
Though far removed northern fleets scarce find
The sun's comfort; others think him too kind.
There is an equal distance from her eye,
Men perish too far off, and burn too nigh.
But as air takes the sun-beam's equal bright
From the first rays, to his last opposite:
So able men, blessed with a virtuous love,
Remote or near, or howsoe'er they move;
Their virtue breaks all clouds that might annoy,
There is no emptiness, but all is joy.
He much profanes whom violent heats do move
To style his wandering rage of passion, love.
Love that imparts in everything delight,
Is feigned, which only tempts man's appetite.
Why love among the virtues is not known
Is, that love is them all contract in one.

To the Countess of Salisbury

August 1614
Fair, great, and good, since seeing you, we see
What heaven can do, and what any earth can be:
Since now your beauty shines, now when the sun
Grown stale, is to so low a value run,
That his dishevelled beams and scattered fires
Serve but for ladies' periwigs and tires
In lovers' sonnets: you come to repair
God's book of creatures, teaching what is fair;
Since now, when all is withered, shrunk, and dried,
All virtue ebbed out to a dead low tide,
All the world's frame being crumbled into sand,
Where every man thinks by himself to stand,
Integrity, friendship, and confidence,
(Cements of greatness) being vapoured hence,
And narrow man being filled with little shares,
Court, city, church, are all shops of small-wares,
All having blown to sparks their noble fire,
And drawn their sound gold-ingot into wire,
All trying by a love of littleness
To make abridgements, and to draw to less
Even that nothing, which at first we were;
Since in these times, your greatness doth appear,
And that we learn by it, that man to get
Towards him, that's infinite, must first be great;
Since in an age so ill, as none is fit
So much as to accuse, much less mend it,
(For who can judge, or witness of those times
Where all alike are guilty of the crimes?)
Where he that would be good, is thought by all
A monster, or at best fantastical:
Since now you durst be good, and that I do
Discern, by daring to contemplate you,
That there may be degrees of fair, great, good,

Though your light, largeness, virtue understood:
If in this sacrifice of mine, be shown
Any small spark of these, call it your own.
And if things like these, have been said by me
Of others; call not that idolatry.
For had God made man first, and man had seen
The third day's fruits, and flowers, and various green,
He might have said the best that he could say
Of those fair creatures, which were made that day:
And when next day, he had admired the birth
Of sun, moon, stars, fairer than late-praised earth,
He might have said the best that he could say,
And not be chid for praising yesterday:
So though some things are not together true
As, that another is worthiest, and, that you:
Yet, to say so, doth not condemn a man,
If when he spoke them, they were both true then.
How fair a proof of this, in our soul grows!
We first have souls of growth, and sense, and those,
When our last soul, our soul immortal came,
Were swallowed into it, and have no name.
Nor doth he injure those souls, which doth cast
The power and praise of both them, on the last;
No more do I wrong any; I adore
The same things now, which I adored before,
The subject changed, and measure; the same thing
In a low constable, and in the King
I reverence; his power to work on me:
So did I humbly reverence each degree
Of fair, great, good, but more, now I am come
From having found their walks, to find their home.
And as I owe my first souls thanks, that they
For my last soul did fit and mould my clay,
So am I debtor unto them, whose worth,
Enabled me to profit, and take forth
This new great lesson, thus to study you;
Which none, not reading others, first, could do.

Nor lack I light to read this book, though I
In a dark cave, yea in a grave do lie;
For as your fellow angels, so you do
Illustrate them who come to study you.
The first whom we in histories do find
To have professed all arts, was one born blind:
He lacked those eyes beasts have as well as we,
Not those, by which angels are seen and see;
So, though I'am born without those eyes to live,
Which fortune, who hath none herself, doth give,
Which are, fit means to see bright courts and you,
Yet may I see you thus, as now I do;
I shall by that, all

EPICEDES AND OBSEQUIES

CONTENTS

ON HIMSELF.
MY FORTUNE AND MY WILL THIS CUSTOM BREAK
MAN IS THE WORLD, AND DEATH THE OCEAN
ELEGY UPON THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF THE INCOMPARABLE PRINCE HENRY
OBSEQUIES OF THE LORD HARRINGTON, BROTHER TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD
ELEGY ON MISTRESS BOULSTRED (I)
ELEGY ON MISTRESS BOULSTRED (II)
DEATH
ELEGY ON THE LORD CHANCELLOR
A HYMN TO THE SAINTS, AND TO MARQUIS HAMILTON

ON HIMSELF.

My fortune and my choice this custom break,
When we are speechless grown to make stones speak.
Though no stone tell thee what I was, yet thou
In my grave's inside seest what thou art now,
Yet thou 'rt not yet so good; till death us lay
To ripe and mellow here, we're stubborn clay.
Parents make us earth, and souls dignify
Us to be glass; here to grow gold we lie.
Whilst in our souls sin bred and pamper'd is,
Our souls become worm-eaten carcases,
So we ourselves miraculously destroy.
Here bodies with less miracle enjoy
Such privileges, enabled here to scale
Heaven, when the trumpet's air shall them exhale.
Hear this, and mend thyself, and thou mend'st me,
By making me, being dead, do good for thee;
    And think me well composed, that I could now
    A last sick hour to syllables allow.

MY FORTUNE AND MY WILL THIS CUSTOM BREAK

MADAM —
That I might make your cabinet my tomb,
And for my fame, which I love next my soul,
Next to my soul provide the happiest room,
Admit to that place this last funeral scroll.
Others by wills give legacies, but I
Dying, of you do beg a legacy.

My fortune and my will this custom break,
When we are senseless grown to make stones speak,
Though no stone tell thee what I was, yet thou
In my grave's inside seest what thou art now,
Yet thou 'rt not yet so good; till death us lay
To ripe and mellow there, we're stubborn clay.
Parents make us earth, and souls dignify
Us to be glass; here to grow gold we lie.
Whilst in our souls sin bred and pamper'd is,
Our souls become worm-eaten carcases.

MAN IS THE WORLD, AND DEATH THE OCEAN

Elegy on the Lady Markham

MAN is the world, and death the ocean,
To which God gives the lower parts of man.
This sea environs all, and though as yet
God hath set marks and bounds ’twixt us and it,
Yet doth it roar, and gnaw, and still pretend,
And breaks our bank, whene’er it takes a friend.
Then our land waters, tears of passion, vent;
Our waters, then, above our firmament
—Tears which our soul doth for her sins let fall—
Take all a brackish taste, and funeral.
And e’en those tears which should wash sin, are sin.
We, after God’s ‘No,’ drown the world again.
Nothing but man of all envenom’d things
Doth work upon itself with inborn stings.
Tears are false spectacles; we cannot see,
Through passion’s mist, what we are or what she.
In her this sea of death hath made no breach,
But as the tide doth wash the slimy beach,
And leaves embroider’d works upon the sand,
So is her flesh refined by death’s cold hand.
As men of China, after an age’s stay,
Do take up porcelain, where they buried clay;
So at this grave, her limbec—which refines
The diamonds, rubies, sapphires, pearls and mines,
Of which this flesh was—her soul shall inspire
Flesh of such stuff, as God, when His last fire
Annuls this world, to recompense it, shall
Make and name then th’ elixir of this all.
They say the sea, when it gains, loseth too;
If carnal death, the younger brother, do
Usurp the body, our soul, which subject is
To th’ elder death by sin, is freed by this.

They perish both, when they attempt the just;
For graves our trophies are, and both death's dust.
So, unobnoxious now, she hath buried both;
For none to death sins, that to sin is loth;
Nor do they die, which are not loth to die;
So hath she this and that virginity.
Grace was in her extremely diligent,
That kept her from sin, yet made her repent.
Of what small spots pure white complains! Alas,
How little poison cracks a crystal glass!
She sinn'd but just enough to let us see
That God's word must be true, 'All, sinners be.'
So much did zeal her conscience rarify,
That extreme truth lacked little of a lie,
Making omissions acts, laying the touch
Of sin on things that sometime may be such.
As Moses' cherubins, whose natures do
Surpass all speed, by him are winged too;
So would her soul, already in heaven, seem then
To climb by tears the common stairs of men.
How fit she was for God, I am content
To speak, that death his vain haste may repent.
How fit for us, how even and how sweet,
How good in all her titles, and how meet
To have reform'd this forward heresy,
That women can no parts of friendship be,
How moral, how divine, shall not be told,
Lest they that hear her virtues, 5 think her old;
And lest we take death's part, and make him glad
Of such a prey, and to his triumph add.

ELEGY UPON THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF THE INCOMPARABLE PRINCE HENRY

LOOK to me, faith, and look to my faith, God;
For both my centres feel this period.
Of weight one centre, one of greatness is;
And reason is that centre, faith is this;
For into our reason flow, and there do end,
All that this natural world doth comprehend,
Quotidian things, and equidistant hence,
Shut in, for man, in one circumference.

But for th' enormous greatnesses, which are
So disproportion'd and so angular,
As is God's essence, place, and providence,
Where, how, when, what souls do, departed hence,
These things (eccentric else) on faith do strike;
Yet neither all, nor upon all, alike.
For reason, put to her best extension,
Almost meets faith, and makes both centres one.
And nothing ever came so near to this,
As contemplation of that prince we miss.

For all that faith might credit mankind could,
Reason still seconded that this prince would.
If, then, least moving of the centre make,
More than if whole hell belch'd, the world to shake,
What must this do, centres distracted so,
That we see not what to believe or know?
Was it not well believed till now, that he,
Whose reputation was an ecstasy
On neighbour states, which knew not why to wake,
Till he discover'd what ways he would take;
For whom, what princes angled, when they tried,
Met a torpedo, and were stupefied;
And others' studies, how he would be bent,

Was his great father's greatest instrument,
And activest spirit, to convey and tie
This soul of peace through Christianity?

Was it not well believed, that he would make
This general peace th' eternal overtake,
And that his times might have stretch'd out so far,
As to touch those of which they emblems are?
For to confirm this just belief, that now
The last days came, we saw heaven did allow
That, but from his aspect and exercise,
In peaceful times rumours of wars did rise.

But now this faith is heresy; we must
Still stay, and vex our great-grandmother, Dust.
O, is God prodigal? hath He spent His store
Of plagues on us; and only now, when more
Would ease us much, doth He grudge misery,
And will not let 's enjoy our curse—to die?
As for the earth thrown lowest down of all,
'Twere an ambition to desire to fall,
So God, in our desire to die, doth know
Our plot for ease, in being wretched so.
Therefore we live; though such a life we have,
As but so many mandrakes on his grave.
What had his growth and generation done,
When, what we are, his putrefaction
Sustains in us, earth, which griefs animate?
Nor hath our world now other soul than that;
And could grief get so high as heaven, that choir,
Forgetting this their new joy, would desire
—With grief to see him—he had stay'd below,
To rectify our errors they foreknow.
Is the other centre, reason, faster then?
Where should we look for that, now we're not men?
For if our reason be our connection
Of causes, now to us there can be none.

For, as if all the substances were spent,
’Twere madness to enquire of accident,
So is ’t to look for reason, he being gone,
The only subject reason wrought upon.
If fate have such a chain, whose divers links
Industrious man discerneth, as he thinks,
When miracle doth come, and so steal in
A new link, man knows not where to begin.
At a much deader fault must reason be,
Death having broke off such a link as he.
But now, for us, with busy proof to come,
That we’ve no reason, would prove we had some.
So would just lamentations; therefore we
May safelier say, that we are dead, than he;
So, if our griefs we do not well declare,
We’ve double excuse; he is not dead, and we are.

Yet I would not die yet; for though I be
Too narrow to think him, as he is he
—Our souls best baiting and mid-period,
In her long journey, of considering God—
Yet, no dishonour, I can reach him thus,
As he embraced the fires of love, with us.
O may I, since I live, but see or hear
That she-intelligence which moved this sphere,
I pardon fate, my life; whoe’er thou be,
Which hast the noble conscience, thou art she.
I conjure thee by all the charms he spoke,
By th’ oaths, which only you two never broke,
By all the souls ye sigh’d, that if you see
These lines, you wish I knew your history;
So, much as you two mutual heavens were here,
I were an angel, singing what you were.

OBSEQUIES OF THE LORD HARRINGTON, BROTHER TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD

To the Countess of BedfordMADAM, I have learned by those laws wherein I am a little conversant, that he which bestows any cost upon the dead, obliges him which is dead, but not the heir; I do not therefore send this paper to your Ladyship that you should thank me for it, or think that I thank you in it; your favours and benefits to me are so much above my merits, that they are even above my gratitude, if that were to be judged by words, which must express it. But, Madam, since your noble brother's fortune being yours, the evidences also concerning it are yours; so, his virtues being yours, the evidences concerning that belong also to you, of which by your acceptance this may be one piece, in which quality I humbly present it, and as a testimony how entirely your family possesseth
Your ladyship's most humble
and thankful servant,
JOHN DONNE.

FAIR soul, which wast, not only as all souls be,
Then when thou wast infusèd, harmony,
But didst continue so; and now dost bear
A part in God's great organ, this whole sphere;
If looking up to God, or down to us,
Thou find that any way is pervious
'Twixt heaven and earth, and that men's actions do
Come to your knowledge, and affections too,
See, and with joy, me to that good degree
Of goodness grown, that I can study thee,
And by these meditations refined,
Can unapparel and enlarge my mind,
And so can make, by this soft ecstasy,
This place a map of heaven, myself of thee.
Thou seest me here at midnight; now all rest;
Times dead-low water, when all minds divest
To-morrow's business; when the labourers have
Such rest in bed, that their last churchyard grave,

Subject to change, will scarce be a type of this;
Now, when the client, whose last hearing is
To-morrow, sleeps; when the condemned man,
Who, when he opes his eyes, must shut them then
Again by death, although sad watch he keep,
Doth practice dying by a little sleep;
Thou at this midnight seest me, and as soon
As that sun rises to me, midnight's noon,
All the world grows transparent, and I see
Through all, both church and state, in seeing thee;
And I discern by favour of this light,
Myself, the hardest object of the sight.
God is the glass; as thou, when thou dost see
Him Who sees all, seest all concerning thee;
So, yet unglorified, I comprehend
All, in these mirrors of thy ways and end.
Though God be our true glass, through which we see
All, since the being of all things is He,
Yet are the trunks which do to us derive
Things, in proportion, fit by perspective,
Deeds of good men; for by their being here,
Virtues, indeed remote, seem to be near.
But where can I affirm, or where arrest
My thoughts on his deeds? which shall I call best?
For fluid virtue cannot be looked on,
Nor can endure a contemplation.
As bodies change, and as I do not wear
Those spirits, humours, blood I did last year,
And, as if on a stream I fix mine eye,
That drop, which I looked on, is presently
Push'd with more waters from my sight, and gone;
So in this sea of virtues, can no one
Be insisted on; virtues as rivers pass,
Yet still remains that virtuous man there was.
And as if man feed on man's flesh, and so
Part of his body to another owe,
Yet at the last two perfect bodies rise,

Because God knows where every atom lies;
So, if one knowledge were made of all those,
Who knew his minutes well, he might dispose
His virtues into names and ranks; but I
Should injure nature, virtue, and destiny,
Should I divide and discontinue so
Virtue, which did in one entireness grow.
For as he that should say spirits are framed
Of all the purest parts that can be named,
Honours not spirits half so much as he
Which says they have no parts, but simple be;
So is ’t of virtue, for a point and one
Are much entirer than a million.
And had fate meant to have had his virtues told,
It would have let him live to have been old;
So then that virtue in season, and then this,
We might have seen, and said, that now he is
Witty, now wise, now temperate, now just.
In good short lives, virtues are fain to thrust,
And to be sure betimes to get a place,
When they would exercise, lack time and space.

So was it in this person, forced to be,
For lack of time, his own epitome;
So to exhibit in few years as much
As all the long-breathed chronicles can touch.
As when an angel down from heaven doth fly,
Our quick thought cannot keep him company;
We cannot think, ‘Now he is at the sun,
Now through the moon, now he through th’ air doth run’;
Yet when he’s come, we know he did repair
To all ’twixt heaven and earth, sun, moon, and air.
And as this angel in an instant knows,
And yet we know, this sudden knowledge grows
By quick amassing several forms of things,
Which he successively to order brings,
When they, whose slow-paced lame thoughts cannot go

So fast as he, think that he doth not so.
Just as a perfect reader doth not dwell
On every syllable, nor stay to spell,
Yet without doubt he doth distinctly see,
And lay together every A and B;
So, in short-lived good men, is not understood
Each several virtue, but the compound good;
For they all virtue's paths in that pace tread,
As angels go, and know, and as men read.
O, why should then these men, these lumps of balm,
Sent hither the world's tempest to becalm,
Before by deeds they are diffused and spread,
And so make us alive, themselves be dead?
O soul, O circle, why so quickly be
Thy ends, thy birth and death closed up in thee?
Since one foot of thy compass still was placed
In heaven, the other might securely have paced,
In the most large extent, through every path
Which the whole world or man th' abridgment hath.
Thou know'st that though the tropic circles have
—Yea, and those small ones which the Poles engrave—
All the same roundness, evenness, and all
The endlessness of th' equinoctial;
Yet, when we come to measure distances,
How here, how there, the sun affected is,
When he doth faintly work, and when prevail,
Only great circles, then, can be our scale.
So though thy circle to thyself express
All, tending to thy endless happiness,
And we by our good use of it may try,
Both how to live well, young, and how to die;
Yet since we must be old, and age endures
His torrid zone at court, and calentures
Of hot ambitions, irreligion's ice,
Zeal's agues, and hydroptic avarice
—Infirmities, which need the scale of truth,
As well as lust and ignorance of youth—

Why didst thou not for these give medicines too,
And by thy doing set us what to do?
Though as small pocket-clocks, whose every wheel
Doth each mismotion and distemper feel,
Whose hands get shaking palsies, and whose string
(His sinews) slackens, and whose soul, the spring,
Expires, or languishes; whose pulse, the fly,
Either beats not, or beats unevenly;
Whose voice, the bell, doth rattle or grow dumb,
Or idle as men which to their last hours are come,
If these clocks be not wound, or be wound still,
Or be not set, or set at every will;
So youth is easiest to destruction,
If then we follow all, or follow none.
Yet, as in great clocks which in steeples chime,
Placed to inform whole towns to employ their time,
An error doth more harm, being general,
When small clocks' faults only on the wearer fall;
So work the faults of age, on which the eye
Of children, servants, or the state rely.
Why wouldst not thou, then, which hadst such a soul,
A clock so true, as might the sun control,
And daily hadst from Him, who gave it thee,
Instructions, such as it could never be
Disorder'd, stay here, as a general
And great sun-dial, to have set us all?
O, why wouldest thou be an instrument
To this unnatural course, or why consent
To this, not miracle, but prodigy,
That when the ebbs longer than flowings be,
Virtue, whose flood did with thy youth begin,
Should so much faster ebb out, than flow in?
Though her flood were blown in by thy first breath,
All is at once sunk in the whirlpool death.
Which word I would not name, but that I see
Death, else a desert, grown a court by thee.
Now I am sure that if a man would have

Good company, his entry is a grave.
Methinks all cities, now, but anthills be,
Where, when the several labourers I see,
For children, house, provision taking pain,
They're all but ants, carrying eggs, straw, and grain.
And churchyards are our cities, unto which
The most repair, that are in goodness rich.
There is the best concourse and confluence,
There are the holy suburbs, and from thence
Begins God's city, New Jerusalem,
Which doth extend her utmost gates to them.
At that gate, then, triumphant soul, dost thou
Begin thy triumph. But since laws allow,
That at the triumph day the people may
All that they will 'gainst the triumpher say,
Let me here use that freedom, and express
My grief, though not to make thy triumph less.
By law to triumphs none admitted be,
Till they as magistrates get victory.
Though then to thy force all youth's foes did yield,
Yet till fit time had wrought thee to that field,
To which thy rank in this state destined thee,
That there thy counsels might get victory,
And so in that capacity remove
All jealousies 'twixt prince and subjects' love,
Thou couldst no title to this triumph have;
Thou didst intrude on death, usurp a grave.

Then, though victoriously, thou hadst fought as yet
But with thine own affections, with the heat
Of youth's desires, and colds of ignorance,
But till thou shouldst successfully advance
Thine arms 'gainst foreign enemies, which are
Both envy, and acclamation popular
—For both these engines equally defeat,
Though by a divers mine, those which are great—
Till then thy war was but a civil war,

For which to triumph none admitted are;
No more are they who, though with good success,
In a defensive war their power express.
Before men triumph, the dominion
Must be enlarged, and not preserved alone.
Why shouldst thou, then, whose battles were to win
Thyself from those straits nature put thee in,
And to deliver up to God that state,
Of which He gave thee the vicariate,
Which is thy soul and body, as entire
As he who takes indentures doth require;
But didst not stay to enlarge His kingdom too,
By making others, what thou didst, to do;
Why shouldst thou triumph now, when heaven no more
Hath got by getting thee, than it had before;
For heaven and thou, e'en when thou livedst here,
Of one another in possession were.
But this from triumph most disables thee,
That that place which is conquered must be
Left safe from present war, and likely doubt
Of imminent commotions to break out;
And hath he left us so? or can it be
His territory was no more than he?

No, we were all his charge; the diocese
Of every exemplar man the whole world is;
And he was joined in commission
With tutelar angels, sent to every one.
But though this freedom to upbraid and chide
Him who triumph'd were lawful, it was tied
With this, that it might never reference have
Unto the senate, who this triumph gave;
Men might at Pompey jest, but they might not
At that authority by which he got
Leave to triumph, before by age he might;
So though, triumphant soul, I dare to write,
Moved with a reverential anger, thus,

That thou so early wouldst abandon us;
Yet I am far from daring to dispute
With that great sovereignty, whose absolute
Prerogative hath thus dispensed with thee,
'Gainst nature's laws, which just impugners be
Of early triumphs; and I, though with pain,
Lessen our loss, to magnify thy gain
Of triumph, when I say, it was more fit
That all men should lack thee, than thou lack it.
Though then in our time be not suffered
That testimony of love unto the dead,
To die with them, and in their graves be hid,
As Saxon wives, and French soldarii did;
And though in no degree I can express
Grief in great Alexander's great excess,
Who at his friend's death made whole towns divest
Their walls and bulwarks, which became them best;
Do not, fair soul, this sacrifice refuse,
That in thy grave I do inter my Muse,
Which, by my grief, great as thy worth, being cast
Behindhand, yet hath spoke, and spoke her last.

ELEGY ON MISTRESS BOULSTRED (I)

DEATH I recant, and say, ‘Unsaid by me,
Whate’er hath slipp’d, that might diminish thee.’
Spiritual treason, atheism ’tis to say
That any can thy summons disobey.
Th’ earth’s face is but thy table; there are set
Plants, cattle, men, dishes for death to eat.

In a rude hunger now he millions draws
Into his bloody, or plaguy, or starved jaws.
Now he will seem to spare, and doth more waste,
Eating the best first, well preserved to last.
Now wantonly he spoils, and eats us not,
But breaks off friends, and lets us piecemeal rot.
Nor will this earth serve him; he sinks the deep
Where harmless fish monastic silence keep;
Who—were Death dead—by roes of living sand
Might sponge that element, and make it land.
He rounds the air, and breaks the hymnic notes
In birds’, heaven’s choristers, organic throats;
Which, if they did not die, might seem to be
A tenth rank in the heavenly hierarchy.
O strong and long-lived death, how earnest thou in?
And how without creation didst begin?
Thou hast, and shalt see dead, before thou diest,
All the four Monarchies, and Antichrist.
How could I think thee nothing, that see now
In all this All nothing else is, but thou?
Our births and lives, vices and virtues, be
Wasteful consumptions, and degrees of thee.
For we, to live, our bellows wear and breath,
Nor are we mortal, dying, dead, but death.
And though thou be’st, O mighty bird of prey,
So much reclaim’d by God, that thou must lay

All that thou kill’st at His feet, yet doth He
Reserve but few, and leaves the most to thee.

And of those few now thou hast overthrown
One whom thy blow makes, not ours, nor thine own.
She was more storeys high; hopeless to come
To her soul, thou hast offer’d at her lower room.
Her soul and body was a king and court;
But thou hast both of captain miss’d and fort.
As houses fall not, though the kings remove,
Bodies of saints rest for their souls above.
Death gets ’twixt souls and bodies such a place
As sin insinuates ’twixt just men and grace;
Both work a separation, no divorce.
Her soul is gone to usher up her corse,
Which shall be almost another soul—for there
Bodies are purer than best souls are here.
Because in her, her virtues did outgo
Her years, would’st thou, O emulous death, do so,
And kill her young to thy loss? must the cost
Of beauty and wit, apt to do harm, be lost?
What though thou found’st her proof ’gainst sins of youth?
O, every age a diverse sin pursueth.
Thou should’st have stayed, and taken better hold.
Shortly, ambitious; covetous, when old,
She might have proved; and such devotion
Might once have stray’d to superstition.
If all her virtues must have grown, yet might
Abundant virtue have bred a proud delight.
Had she persever’d just, there would have been
Some that would sin, misthinking she did sin.
Such as would call her friendship, love, and feign
To sociableness, a name profane,
Or sin by tempting, or, not daring that,
By wishing, though they never told her what.
Thus mightst thou have slain more souls had’st thou not cross’d
Thyself, and to triumph, thine army lost.

Yet though these ways be lost, thou hast left one,
Which is, immoderate grief that she is gone.
But we may ’scape that sin, yet weep as much;
Our tears are due because we are not such.
Some tears, that knot of friends, her death must cost,
Because the chain is broke, but no link lost.

ELEGY ON MISTRESS BOULSTRED (II)

DEATH, be not proud, thy hand gave not this blow;
Sin was her captive, whence thy power doth flow;
The executioner of wrath thou art,
But to destroy the just is not thy part.
Thy coming, terror, anguish, grief denounces;
Her happy state, courage, ease, joy pronounces.
From out the crystal palace of her breast,
The clearer soul was call'd to endless rest
—Not by the thundering voice, wherewith God threats,
But as with crowned saints in heaven He treats—
And, waited on by angels, home was brought,
To joy that it through many dangers sought.
The key of mercy gently did unlock
The doors 'twixt heaven and it, when life did knock.
Nor boast the fairest frame was made thy prey,
Because to mortal eyes it did decay.
A better witness than thou art, assures,
That though dissolved, it yet a space endures;
No dram thereof shall want or loss sustain,
When her best soul inhabits it again.
Go then to people cursed before they were;
Their souls in triumph to thy conquest bear.
Glory not thou thyself in these hot tears
Which our face, not for her, but our harm wears;
The mourning livery given by grace, not thee,
Which wills our souls in these streams washed should be;
And on our hearts, her memory's best tomb,
In this her epitaph doth write thy doom.
Blind were those eyes, saw not how bright did shine
Through flesh's misty veil those beams divine;
Deaf were the ears, not charm'd with that sweet sound
Which did i' th' spirit's instructed voice abound;
Of flint the conscience, did not yield and melt,
At what in her last act it saw and felt.

Weep not, nor grudge then to have lost her sight,
Taught thus, our after stay's but a short night;
But by all souls not by corruption choked
Let in high raisèd notes that power be invoked,
Calm the rough seas by which she sails to rest
From sorrows here to a kingdom ever blest.
And teach this hymn of her with joy, and sing,
'The grave no conquest gets, Death hath no sting.'

DEATH

LANGUAGE, thou art too narrow and too weak
To ease us now; great sorrows cannot speak.
If we could sigh out accents, and weep words,
Grief wears, and lessens, that tears breath affords.
Sad hearts, the less they seem, the more they are
—So guiltiest men stand mutest at the bar—
Not that they know not, feel not their estate,
But extreme sense hath made them desperate.
Sorrow, to whom we owe all that we be,
Tyrant, in the fifth and greatest monarchy,
Was ’t that she did possess all hearts before,
Thou hast kill’d her, to make thy empire more?
Knew’st thou some would, that knew her not, lament,
As in a deluge perish th’ innocent?
Was ’t not enough to have that palace won,
But thou must raze it too, that was undone?
Hadst thou stay’d there, and look’d out at her eyes,
All had adored thee, that now from thee flies;
For they let out more light than they took in,
They told not when, but did the day begin.
She was too sapphirine and clear for thee;
Clay, flint, and jet now thy fit dwellings be.
Alas! she was too pure, but not too weak;
Whoe’er saw crystal ordnance but would break?
And if we be thy conquest, by her fall
Thou hast lost thy end; in her we perish all;
Or if we live, we live but to rebel,
That know her better now, who knew her well.

If we should vapour out, and pine, and die,
Since she first went, that were not misery.
She changed our world with hers; now she is gone,
Mirth and prosperity is oppression;

For of all moral virtues she was all,
That ethics speak of virtues cardinal.

Her soul was paradise; the cherubin
Set to keep it was grace, that kept out sin.
She had no more than let in death, for we
All reap consumption from one fruitful tree.
God took her hence, lest some of us should love
Her, like that plant, Him and His laws above;
And when we tears, He mercy shed in this,
To raise our minds to heaven, where now she is;
Who if her virtues would have let her stay
We had had a saint, have now a holiday.
Her heart was that strange bush, where sacred fire,
Religion, did not consume, but inspire
Such piety, so chaste use of God's day,
That what we turn to feast, she turn'd to pray;
And did prefigure here, in devout taste,
The rest of her high Sabbath, which shall last.
Angels did hand her up, who next God dwell,
For she was of that order whence most fell;
Her body's left with us, lest some had said,
She could not die, except they saw her dead;
For from less virtue, and less beauteousness,
The Gentiles framed them gods and goddesses.
The ravenous earth, that now woos her to be
Earth too, will be a Lemnia, and the tree
That wraps that crystal in a wooden tomb
Shall be took up spruce, fill'd with diamond.
And we her sad glad friends all bear a part
Of grief, for all would break a Stoic's heart.

ELEGY ON THE LORD CHANCELLOR

SORROW, who to this house scarce knew the way,
Is, O, heir of it, our all is his prey.
This strange chance claims strange wonder, and to us
Nothing can be so strange as to weep thus.
’Tis well his life’s loud-speaking works deserve,
And give praise too, our cold tongues could not serve;
’Tis well he kept tears from our eyes before,
That to fit this deep ill we might have store.
O, if a sweet briar climb up by a tree,
If to a paradise that transplanted be,
Or fell’d, and burnt for holy sacrifice,
Yet that must wither which by it did rise,
As we for him dead; though no family
E’er rigg’d a soul for heaven’s discovery
With whom more venturers more boldly dare
Venture their states, with him in joy to share,
We lose what all friends loved, him; he gains now
But life by death, which worst foes would allow,
If he could have foes, in whose practice grew
All virtues, whose name subtle schoolmen knew.
What ease can hope that we shall see him beget,
When we must die first, and cannot die yet?
His children are his pictures; O, they be
Pictures of him dead, senseless, cold as he.
Here needs no marble tomb, since he is gone,
He, and about him his, are turn’d to stone.

A HYMN TO THE SAINTS, AND TO MARQUIS HAMILTON

To Sir Robert CarrSIR, I presume you rather try what you can do in me, than what I can do in verse; you know my uttermost when it was best, and even then I did best when I had least truth for my subjects. In this present case there is so much truth as it defeats all poetry. Call therefore this paper by what name you will, and, if it be not worthy of him, nor of you, nor of me, smother it, and be that the sacrifice. If you had commanded me to have waited on his body to Scotland and preached there, I would have embraced the obligation with more alacrity; but I thank you that you would command me that which I was loth to do, for even that hath given a tincture of merit to the obedience of
Your poor friend and
servant in Christ Jesus,
J. D.

WHETHER that soul which now comes up to you
Fill any former rank, or make a new;
Whether it take a name named there before,
Or be a name itself and order more
Than was in heaven till now—for may not he
Be so, if every several angel be
A kind alone? whatever order grow
Greater by him in heaven, we do not so.
One of your orders grows by his access,
But, by his loss, grow all our orders less;
The name of father, master, friend, the name
Of subject and of prince, in one is lame;
Fair mirth is damp'd, and conversation black,
The Household widow'd, and the Garter slack;
The Chapel wants an ear, Council a tongue;
Story, a theme; and Music lacks a song.
Blest order that hath him, the loss of him
Gangrened all orders here; all lost a limb.
Never made body such haste to confess

What a soul was; all former comeliness
Fled, in a minute, when the soul was gone;
And, having lost that beauty, would have none.
So fell our monasteries, in an instant grown
Not to less houses, but to heaps of stone;
So sent his body that fair form it wore
Unto the sphere of forms, and doth—before
His soul shall fill up his sepulchral stone—
Anticipate a resurrection.
For, as in his fame now his soul is here,
So, in the form thereof, his body's there;
And if, fair soul, not with first Innocents
Thy station be, but with the Penitents,
—And who shall dare to ask then, when I am
Dyed scarlet in the blood of that pure Lamb,
Whether that colour, which is scarlet then,
Were black or white before in eyes of men?—
When thou rememb'rest what sins thou didst find
Amongst those many friends now left behind,
And seest such sinners, as they are, with thee
Got thither by repentance, let it be
Thy wish to wish all there, to wish them clean,
Wish him a David, her a Magdalen.

EPIGRAMS

CONTENTS

HERO AND LEANDER.
PYRAMUS AND THISBE.
NIOBE.
A BURNT SHIP.
FALL OF A WALL.
A LAME BEGGAR.
A SELF-ACCUSER.
A LICENTIOUS PERSON.
ANTIQUARY.
DISINHERITED.
PHRYNE.
AN OBSCURE WRITER.
KLOCKIUS
RADERUS.
MERCURIUS GALLO-BELGICUS.
RALPHIUS

HERO AND LEANDER.

BOTH robb’d of air, we both lie in one ground;
Both whom one fire had burnt, one water drown’d.

PYRAMUS AND THISBE.

Two, by themselves, each other, love and fear,
Slain, cruel friends, by parting have join’d here.

NIOBE.

By children’s births, and death, I am become
So dry, that I am now mine own sad tomb.

A BURNT SHIP.

Out of a fired ship, which by no way
But drowning could be rescued from the flame,
Some men leap’d forth, and ever as they came
Near the foes’ ships, did by their shot decay;
So all were lost, which in the ship were found,
They in the sea being burnt, they in the burnt ship drowned.

FALL OF A WALL.

Under an undermined and shot-bruised wall
A too-bold captain perish’d by the fall,
Whose brave misfortune happiest men envied,
That had a town for tomb, his bones to hide.

A LAME BEGGAR.

I am unable, yonder beggar cries,
To stand, or move; if he say true, he lies.

A SELF-ACCUSER.

Your mistress, that you follow whores, still taxeth you;
‘Tis strange that she should thus confess it, though ‘t be true.

A LICENTIOUS PERSON.

Thy sins and hairs may no man equal call;
For, as thy sins increase, thy hairs do fall.

ANTIQUARY.

If in his study he hath so much care
To hang all old strange things, let his wife beware.

DISINHERITED.

Thy father all from thee, by his last will,
Gave to the poor; thou hast good title still.

PHRYNE.

Thy flattering picture, Phryne, is like thee,
Only in this, that you both painted be.

AN OBSCURE WRITER.

Philo with twelve years’ study hath been grieved
To be understood; when will he be believed?

KLOCKIUS

Klockius so deeply hath sworn ne’er more to come
In bawdy house, that he dares not go home.

RADERUS.

Why this man gelded Martial I muse,
Except himself alone his tricks would use,
As Katherine, for the court’s sake, put down stews.

MERCURIUS GALLO-BELGICUS.

Like Esop’s fellow-slaves, O Mercury,
Which could do all things, thy faith is; and I
Like Esop’s self, which nothing. I confess
I should have had more faith, if thou hadst less.
Thy credit lost thy credit. ‘Tis sin to do,
In this case, as thou wouldst be done unto,
To believe all. Change thy name; thou art like
Mercury in stealing, but liest like a Greek.

RALPHIUS

Compassion in the world again is bred;
Ralphius is sick, the broker keeps his bed.

INFINITATI SACRUM

16. Augusti 1601.

METEMPSYCOSIS.

EPISTLE.

Others at the Porches and entries of their Buildings set their Armes; I, my picture; if any colours can deliver a minde so plaine, and flat, and through-light as mine. Naturally at a new Author, I doubt, and sticke, and doe not say quickly, good. I censure much and taxe; And this liberty costs mee more than others, by how much my owne things are worse than others. Yet I would not be so rebellious against my selfe, as not to doe it, since I love it; nor so unjust to others, to do it sine talione. As long as I give them as good hold upon mee, they must pardon mee my bitings. I forbid no reprehender, but him that like the Trent Councell forbids not bookes, but Authors, damning what ever such a name hath or shall write. None writes so ill, that he gives not some thing exemplary, to follow, or flie. Now when I beginne this booke, I have no purpose to come into any mans debt; how my stocke will hold out I know not; perchance waste, perchance increase in use; if I doe borrow any thing of Antiquitie, besides that I make account that I pay it to posterity, with as much and as good: You shall still finde mee to acknowledge it, and to thanke not him onely that hath digg'd out treasure for mee, but that hath lighted mee a candle to the place. All which I bid you remember, (for I will have no such Readers as I can teach) is, that the Pithagorian doctrine doth not onely carry one soule from man to man, nor man to beast, but indifferently to plants also: and therefore you must not grudge to finde the same soule in an Emperour, in a Post-horse, and in a Mucheron, since no unreadinesse in the soule, but an indisposition in the organs workes this. And therefore though this soule could not move when it was a Melon, yet it may remember, and now tell mee, at what lascivious banquet it was serv'd. And though it could not speaker, when it was a spider, yet it can remember, and now tell me, who used it for poison to

attaine dignitie. How ever the bodies have dull'd her other faculties, her memory hath ever been her owne, which makes me so seriously deliver you by her relation all her passages from her first making when shee was that apple which Eve eate, to this time when shee is hee, whose life you shall finde in the end of this booke.

THE PROGRESS OF THE SOUL

First Song.

I.

I sing of the progresse of a deathlesse soule,
Whom Fate, which God made, but doth not controule,
Plac'd in most shapes; all times before the law
Yoak'd us, and when, and since, in this I sing.
And the great world to his aged evening;
From infant morne, through manly noone I draw.
What the gold Chaldee, or silver Persian saw,
Greeke brasse, or Roman iron, is in this one;
A worke t'outweare Seths pillars, bricke and stone,
And (holy writt excepted) made to yeeld to none.

II.

Thee, eye of heaven, this greate Soule envies not,
By thy male force, is all wee have, begot,
In the first East, thou now beginst to shine,
Suck'st early balme, and Iland spices there,
And wilt anon in thy loose-rein'd careere
At Tagus, Po, Sene, Thames, and Danow dine.
And see at night thy Westerne land of Myne,
Yet hast thou not more nations seene then shee,
That before thee, one day beganne to bee,
And thy fraile light being quench'd, shall long, long out live thee.

III.

Nor, holy Janus, in whose soveraigne boate
The Church, and all the Monarchies did floate:
That swimming Colledge, and free Hospitall
Of all mankinde, that cage and vivarie
Of fowles, and beastes, in whose wombe, Destinie

us, and our latest nephewes did install
(From thence are all deriv'd, that fills this All,)
Did'st thou in that great stewardship embarke
So diverse shapes into that floating parke,
As have beene moved, and inform'd by this heavenly sparke.

IV.

Great Destiny the Commissary of God,
That hast mark'd out a path and period
For every thing; who, where wee of-spring tooke,
Our wayes and ends seest at one instant; Thou
Knot of all causes, thou whose changelesse brow
Ne'r smiles nor frownes, O vouch thou safe to looke
And shew my story, in thy eternall booke:
That (if my prayer be fit) I may'understand
So much my selfe, as to know with what hand,
How scant, or liberall this my lifes race is spand.

V.

To my sixe lustres almost now outwore,
Except thy booke owe me so many more,
Except my legend be free from the letts
Of steepe ambition, sleepie povertie,
Spirit-quenching sicknesse, dull captivitie,
Distracting businesse, and from beauties nets,
And all that calls from this, and to others whets,
O let me not launch out, but let me save
Th'expense of braine and spirit; that my grave
His right and due, a whole unwasted man may have.

VI.

But if my dayes be long, and good enough,
In vaine this sea shall enlarge, or enrough

It selfe; for I will through the wave, and fome,
And shall, in sad lone wayes a lively spright,
Make my darke heavy Poëm light, and light.
For though through many streights, and lands I roame,
I launch at paradise, and I saile towards home;
The course I there began, shall here be staid,
Sailes hoised there, stroke here, and anchors laid
In Thames, which were at Tygrys, and Euphrates waide.

VII.

For the great soule which here amongst us now
Doth dwell, and moves that hand, and tongue, and brow,
Which, as the Moone the sea, moves us; to heare
Whose story, with long patience you will long;
(For ‘tis the crowne, and last straine of my song)
This soule to whom Luther and Mahomet were
Prisons of flesh; this soule which oft did teare,
And mend the wracks of th’Empire, and late Rome,
And liv’d when every great change did come,
Had first in paradise, a low, but fatall roome.

VIII.

Yet no low roome, nor then the greatest, lesse,
If (as devout and sharpe men fitly guesse)
That Crosse, our joy, and griefe, where nailes did tye
That All, which alwayes was all, every where,
Which could not sinne, and yet all sinnes did beare;
Which could not die, yet could not chuse but die;
Stood in the selfe same roome in Calvarie,
Where first grew the forbidden learned tree,
For on that tree hung in security
This Soule, made by the Makers will from pulling free.

IX.

Prince of the orchard, faire as dawning morne,
Fenc’d with the law, and ripe as soone as borne
That apple grew, which this Soule did enlive
Till the then climing serpent, that now creeps
For that offence, for which all mankinde weepes,
Tooke it, and t’her whom the first man did wive
(Whom and her race, only forbiddings drive)
He gave it, she, t’her husband, both did eate;
So perished the eaters, and the meate:
And wee (for treason taints the blood) thence die and sweat.

X.

Man all at once was there by woman slaine,
And one by one we’are here slaine o’er againe
By them. The mother poison’d the well-head,
The daughters here corrupt us, Rivolets,
No smalnesse scapes, no greatnesse breaks their nets,
She thrust us out, and by them we are led
Astray, from turning, to whence we are fled.
Were prisoners Judges, ‘twould seeme rigorous,
Shee sinn’d, we beare; part of our paine is, thus
To love them, whose fault to this painfull love yoak’d us.

XI.

So fast in us doth this corruption grow,
That now wee dare aske why wee should be so.
Would God (disputes the curious Rebell) make
A law, and would not have it kept? Or can
His creatures will, crosse his? Of every man
For one, will God (and be just) vengeance take?
Who sinn’d? t’was not forbidden to the snake
Nor her, who was not then made; nor is’t writ
That Adam cropt, or knew the apple; yet
The worme and she, and he, and wee endure for it.

XII.

But snatch mee heavenly Spirit from this vaine
Reckoning their vanities, lesse is their gaine
Then hazard still, to meditate on ill,
Though with good minde, their reasons, like those toyes
Of glassie bubbles, which the gamesome boyes
Stretch to so nice a thinnes through a quill
That they themselves breake, doe themselves spill,
Arguing is heretiques game, and Exercise
As wrastlers, perfects them; Not liberties
Of speech, but silence; hands, not tongues, end heresies.

XIII.

Just in that instant when the serpents gripe,
Broke the slight veines, and tender the conduit-pipe,
Through which this soule from the trees root did draw
Life, and growth to this apple, fled away
This loose soule, old, one and another day.
As lightning, which one scarce dares say, he saw,
'Tis so soone gone, (and better proofe the law
Of sense, then faith requires) swiftly she flew
To a darke and foggie Plot; Her, her fates threw
There through th'earths pores, and in a Plant hous'd her anew.

XIV.

The plant thus abled, to it selfe did force
A place, where no place was; by natures course
As aire from water, water fleets away
From thicker bodies, by this root thronged so
His spungie confines gave him place to grow,
Just as in our streets, when the people stay
To see the Prince, and so fill up the way
That weesels scarce could passe, when she comes nere
They throng and cleave up, and a passage cleare,
As if, for that time, their round bodies flatned were.

XV.

His right arme he thrust out towards the East,
West-ward his left; th'ends did themselves digest
Into ten lesser strings, these fingers were:
And as a slumberer stretching on his bed,
This way he this, and that way scattered
His other legge, which feet with toes upbeare;
Grew on his middle parts, the first day, haire,
To show, that in loves businesse hee should still
A dealer bee, and be us'd well, or ill:
His apples kindle, his leaves, force of conception kill.

XVI.

A mouth, but dumbe, he hath; blinde eyes, deafe eares,
And to his shoulders dangle subtile haires;
A young Colussus there hee stands upright,
And as that ground by him were conquered
A leafe garland weares he on his head
Enchas'd with little fruits, so red and bright
That for them you would call your Loves lips white;
So, of a lone unhaunted place possest,
Did this soules second Inne, built by the guest
This living buried man, this quiet mandrake, rest.

XVII.

No lustfull woman came this plant to grieve,
But 'twas because there was none yet but Eve:
And she (with other purpose) kill'd it quite;
Her sinne had now brought in infirmities,
And so her cradled child, the moist red eyes
Had never shut, nor slept since it saw light,
Poppie she knew, she knew the mandrakes might;
And tore up both, and so coold her childs blood;
Unvirtuous weeds might long unvex'd have stood;
But hee's short liv'd, that with his death can doe most good.

XVIII.

To an unfettered soules quick nimble haste
Are falling stars, and hearts thoughts, but slow pac'd:
Thinner than burnt aire flies this soule, and she
Whom foure new coming, and foure parting Suns
Had found, and left the Mandrakes tenant, runnes
Thoughtlesse of change, when her firme destiny
Confin'd, and enjayld her, that seem'd so free,
Into a smallblew shell, the which a poore
Warme bird orespread, and sat still evermore,
Till her inclos'd child kickt, and pick't it selfe a dore.

XIX.

Outcrept a sparrow, this soules moving Inne,
On whose raw armes stiffe feathers now begin,
As childrens teeth through gummes, to breake with paine,
His flesh is jelly yet, and his bones threds,
All a new downy mantle overspreads,
A mouth he opes, which would as much containe
As his late house, and the first houre speaks plaine,
And chirps alowd for meat. Meat fit for men
His father steales for him, and so feeds then
One, that within a moneth, will beate him from his hen.

XX.

In this worlds youth wise nature did make haste,
Things ripened sooner, and did longer last;
Already this hot cocke, in bush and tree
In field and tent oreflutters his next hen,
He asks her not, who did so last, nor when,
Nor if his sister, or his neece shee be;
Nor doth she pule for his inconstancie
If in her sight he change, nor doth refuse
The next that calls; both liberty doe use,
Where store is of both kindes, both kindes may freely chuse.

XXI.

Men, till they tooke laws which made freedome lesse,
Their daughters, and their sisters did ingress;
Till now unlawfull, therefore ill, ‘twas not.
So jolly, that it can move, this soule is,
The body so free of his kindnesses,
That selfe preserving it hath now forgot,
And slackneth so the soules, and bodies knot,
Which temperance streightens; freely on his she friends
He blood, and spirit, pith, and marrow spends,
    Ill steward of himself, himselfe in three years ends.

XXII.

Else might he long have liv’d; man did not know
Of gummie blood, which doth in holly grow,
How to make bird-lime, nor how to deceive
With faind calls, hid nets, or enwrapping snare
The free inhabitants of the Plyant aire.
Man to beget, and woman to conceive
Askt not of rootes, nor of cock-sparrowes, leave:
Yet chuseth hee, though none of these he feares,
Pleasantly three, than streightned twenty yeares
    To live, and to encrease his race, himselfe outweares.

XXIII.

This cole with overblowing quench’d and dead,
The Soule from her too active organs fled
T’a brooke. A female fishes sandie Roe
With the males jelly, newly lev’ned was,
For they had intertouch’d as they did passe,
And one of those small bodies, fitted so,
This soule inform’d, and abled it to rowe
It selfe with finnie oares, which she did fit:
Her scales seem’d yet of parchment, and as yet
    Perchance a fish, but by no name you could call it.

XXIV.

When goodly, like a ship in her full trim,
A swan, so white that you may unto him
Compare all whitenesse, but himselfe to none,
Glided along, and as he glided watch’d,
And with his arched necke this poore fish catch’d.
It mov’d with state, as if to looke upon
Low things it scorn’d, and yet before that one
Could thinke he sought it, he had swallowed cleare
This, and much such, and unblam’d devour’d there
All, but who too swift, too great, or well arm’d were.

XXV.

Now swome a prison in a prison put,
And now this Soule in double walls was shut,
Till melted with the Swans digestive fire,
She left her house the fish, and vapour’d forth;
Fate not affording bodies of more worth
For her as yet, bids her againe retire
T’another fish, to any new desire
Made a new prey; For, he that can to none
Resistance make, nor complaint, sure is gone.
Weaknesse invites, but silence feasts oppression.

XXVI.

Pace with her native streame, this fish doth keepe,
And journeyes with her, towards the glassie deepe,
But oft retarded, once with a hidden net
Though with greate windowes, for when Need first taught
These tricks to catch food, then they were not wrought
As now, with curious greedinesse to let
None scape, but few, and fit for use, to get,
As, in this trap a ravenous pike was tane,
Who, though himselfe distrest, would faine have slain
This wretch; So hardly are ill habits left again.

XXVII.

Here by her smallnesse shee two deaths orepast,
Once innocence scap’d, and left the oppressor fast.
The net through-swome, she keepes the liquid path,
And whether she leape up sometimes to breath
And suck in aire, or find it underneath,
Or working parts like mills or limbecks hath
To make the water thinne and airelike, faith
Cares not; but safe the Place she’s come unto
Where fresh, with salt waves meet, and what to doe
She knowes not, but betweene both makes a boord or two.

XXVIII.

So farre from hiding her guests, water is,
That she showes them in bigger quantities
Then they are. Thus doubtfull of her way,
For game and not for hunger a sea Pie
Spied through this traitorous spectacle, from high,
The seely fish where it disputing lay,
And t’end her doubts and her, beares her away,
Exhalted she’is, but to the exhalters good,
As are by great ones, men which lowly stood.
It’s rais’d, to be the Raisers instrument and food.

XXIX.

Is any kinde subject to rape like fish?
Ill unto man, they neither doe, nor wish:
Fishers they kill not, nor with noise awake,
They doe not hunt, nor strive to make a prey
Of beasts, nor their yong sonnes to beare away;
Foules they pursue not, nor do undertake
To spoile the nests industrious birds do make;
Yet them all these unkinde kinds feed upon,
To kill them is an occupation,
And lawes make fasts, and lents for their destruction.

XXX.

A sudden stiffe land-winde in that selfe houre
To sea-ward forc’d this bird, that did devour
The fish; he cares not, for with ease he flies,
Fat gluttonies best orator: at last
So long hee hath flowen, and hath flowen so fast
That leagues o’er-past at sea, now tir’d hee lyes,
And with his prey, that till then languisht, dies,
The soules no longer foes, two wayes did erre,
The fish I follow, and keepe no calender
Of the other; he lives yet in some great officer.

XXXI.

Into an embrion fish, our Soule is throwne,
And in due time throwne out againe, and growne
To such vastnesse, as if unmanacled
From Greece, Morea were, and that by some
Earthquake unrooted, loose Morea swome,
Or seas from Africks body had severed
And torne the hopefull Promontories head,
This fish would seeme these, and, when all hopes faile,
A great ship overset, or without saile
Hulling, might (when this was a whelp) be like this whale.

XXXII.

At every stroake his brazen finnes do take,
More circles in the broken sea they make
Then cannons voices, when the aire they teare:
His ribs are pillars, and his high arch’d roofe
Of barke that blunts best steele, is thunder-proofe:
Swimme in him swallowed Dolphins, without feare,
And feele no sides, as if his vast wombe were
Some inland sea, and ever as hee went
He spouted rivers up, as if he ment
To joyne our seas, with seas above the firmament.

XXXIII.

He hunts not fish, but as an officer,
Stayes in his court, at his owne net, and there
All suitors of all sorts themselves enthrall;
So on his backe lyes this whale wantoning,
And in his gulfe-like throat, sucks every thing
That passeth neare. Fish chaseth fish, and all,
Flyer and follower, in this whirlepoole fall;
O might not states of more equality
Consist? and is it of necessity
    That thousand guiltlesse smals, to make one great, must die?

XXXIV.

Now drinkes he up seas, and he eates up flocks,
He justles Ilands, and he shakes firme rockes.
Now in a roomefull house this Soule doth float,
And like a Prince she sends her faculties
To all her limbes, distant as Provinces.
The Sunne hath twenty times both crab and goate
Parched, since first lanch'd forth this living boate,
'Tis greatest now, and to destruction
Nearest; There's no pause at perfection,
    Greatenesse a period hath, but hath no station.

XXXV.

Two little fishes whom hee never harm'd,
Nor fed on their kinde, two not thoroughly arm'd
With hope that they could kill him, nor could doe
Good to themselves by his death (they did not eate
His flesh, nor suck those oyles, which thence outstreat)
Conspir'd against him, and it might undoe
The plot of all, that the plotters were two,
But that they fishes were, and could not speake.
How shall a Tyran wise strong projects breake,
    If wreches can on them the common anger wreake?

XXXVI.

The flaile-finn’d Thresher, and steel-beak’d Sword-fish
Onely attempt to doe, what all doe wish.
The Thresher backs him, and to beate begins;
The sluggard Whale yeelds to oppression,
And t’hide himselfe from shame and danger, downe
Begins to sinke; the Swordfish upward spins,
And gores him with his beake; his staffe-like finnes,
So well the one, his sword the other plyes,
That now a scoffe, and prey, this tyran dyes,
And (his owne dole) feeds with himselfe all companies.

XXXVII.

Who will revenge his death? or who will call
Those to account, that thought, and wrought his fall?
The heires of slaine kings, wee see are often so
Transported with the joy of what they get,
That they, revenge and obsequies forget,
Nor will against such men the people goe,
Because h’is now dead, to whom they should show
Love in that act. Some kings by vice being growne
So needy of subjects love, that of their own
They thinke they lose, if love be to the dead Prince showne.

XXXVIII.

This Soule, now free from prison, and passion,
Hath yet a little indignation
That so small hammers should so soone downe beat
So great a castle. And having for her house
Got the streight cloyster of a wreched mouse
(As basest men that have not what to eate,
Nor enjoy ought, doe farre more hate the great
Then they, who good repos’d estates possesse)
This Soule, late taught that great things might by lesse
Be slaine, to gallant mischiefe doth herself addresse.

XXXIX.

Natures great master-peece, an Elephant,
The onely harmlesse great thing; the giant
Of beasts; who thought, no more had gone, to make one wise
But to be just, and thankfull, loth to offend,
(Yet nature hath given him no knees to bend)
Himselfe he up-props, on himselfe relies,
And foe to none, suspects no enemies,
Still sleeping stood; vex't not his fantasie
Blacke dreames, like and unbent bow, carelessly
His sinewy Proboscis did remisly lie.

XL.

In which as in a gallery this mouse
Walk'd, and surveid the roomes of this vast house,
And to the braine, the soules bedchamber, went,
And gnaw'd the life cords there; Like a whole towne
Cleane undermin'd, the slaine beast tumbled downe,
With him the murtherer dies whom envy sent
To kill, not scape, (for, only hee that ment
To die, did ever kill a man of better roome,)
And thus he made his foe, his prey, and tombe:
Who cares not to turn back, may any whither come.

XLI.

Next, hous'd this Soule a Wolves yet unborne whelp,
Till the best midwife, Nature, gave it helpe,
To issue. It could kill, as soon as goe:
Abel, as white, and milde as his sheepe were,
(Who in that trade, of Church, and kingdomes, there
Was the first type) was still infested soe,
With this wolfe, that it bred his losse and woe;
And yet his bitch, his sentinell attends
The flocke so neere, so well warnes and defends,
That the wolfe, (hopelesse else) to corrupt her, intends.

XLII.

Hee tooke a course, which since, successfully,
Great men have often taken, to espie
The counsels, or to breake the plots of foes,
To Abels tent he stealeth in the darke,
On whose skirts the bitch slept; ere she could barke,
Attach'd her with streight gripes, yet hee call'd those,
Embracements of love; to loves work he goes,
Where deeds move more than words; nor doth she show,
Nor much resist, nor needs hee streighten so
His prey, for, were shee loose, she would nor barke, nor goe.

XLIII.

Hee hath engag'd her; his, she wholy bides;
Who not her owne, none others secrets hides,
If to the flocke he come, and Abell there,
She faines hoarse barkings, but she biteth not,
Her faith is quite, but not her love forgot.
At last a trap, of which some every where
Abell had plac'd, ends all his losse, and feare,
By the Wolves death; and now just time it was
That a quick soule should give life to that masse
Of blood in Abels bitch, and thither this did passe.

XLIV.

Some have their wives, their sisters some begot,
But in the lives of Emperours you shall not
Reade of a lust the which may equall this;
This wolfe begot himselfe, and finished
What he began alive, when hee was dead,
Sonne to himselfe, and father too, hee is
A ridling lust, for which Schoolemen would misse
A proper name. The whelpe of both these lay
In Abels tent, and with soft Moaba,
His sister, being yong, it us'd to sport and play.

XLV.

Hee soone for her too harsh, and churlish grew,
And Abell (the dam dead) would use this new
For the field, being of two kindes thus made,
He, as his dam, from sheepe drove wolves away,
And as his Sire, he made them his ownes prey.
Five years he liv'd, and cosened with his trade,
Then hopeless that his faults were hid, betraid
Himselfe by flight, and by all followed,
From dogges, a wolfe; from wolves, a dogge he fled;
And, like a spie to both sides false, he perished.

XLVI.

It quickened next a toyfull Ape, and so
Gamesome it was, that it might freely goe
From tent to tent, and with the children play,
His organs now so like theirs hee doth finde,
That why he cannot laugh, and speake his minde,
He wonders. Much with all, most he doth stay
With Adams fift daughter Siphatecia
Doth gaze on her, and, where she passeth, passe,
Gathers her fruits, and tumbles on the grasse,
And wisest of that kinde, the first true lover was.

XLVII.

He was the first that more desir'd to have
One then another; first that ere did crave
Love by mute signes, and had no power to speake;
First that could make love faces, or could doe
The valters sombersalts, or us'd to wooe
With hoiting gambolls, his owne bones to breake
To make his mistresse merry; or to wreake
Her anger on himselfe. Sinnes against kinde
They easily doe, that can let feed their minde
With outward beauty, beauty they in boyes and beasts do find.

XLVIII.

By this misled, too low things men have prov’d,
And too high; beasts and angels have beene lov’d;
This Ape, though else through-vaine, in this was wise,
He reach’d at things too high, but open way
There was, and he knew not she would say nay;
His toyes prevaile not, likelier meanes he tries,
He gazeth on her face with teare-shot eyes,
And up lifts subtly with his russet pawe
Her kidskinne apron without feare or awe
Of Nature; Nature hath no gaole, though she hath law.

XLIX.

First she was silly and knew not what he ment,
That vertue, by his touches, chaft and spent,
Succeeds an itchie warmth, that melts her quite,
She knew not first, now cares not what he doth,
And willing halfe and more, more then halfe loth,
She neither puls nor pushes, but outright
Now cries, and now repents; when Tethlemite
Her brother, enterd, and a great stone threw
After the Ape, who thus prevented, flew,
This house thus batter’d downe, the Soule possest a new.

L.

And whether by this change she lose or win,
She comes out next, where the Ape would have gone in,
Adam and
Eve
had mingled bloods, and now
Like Chimiques equall fires, her temperate wombe
Had stew’d and form’d it: and part did become
A spungie liver, that did richly allow,
Like a free conduit, on a high hils brow,
Life keeping moisture unto every part;

Part hardned it selfe to a thicker heart,
Whose busie furnaces lifes spirits do impart.

LI.

Another part became the well of sense,
The tender well-arm’d feeling braine, from whence,
Those sinowie strings which do our bodies tie,
Are raveld out; and fast there by one end,
Did this Soule limbes, these limbes a soule attend;
And now they joyn’d; keeping some quality
Of every past shape, she knew treachery,
Rapine, deceit, and lust, and ills enow
To be a woman. Themech she is now,
Sister and wife to Caine, Caine that first did plow.

LII.

Who ere thou beest that read’st this sullen Writ,
Which just so much courts thee, as thou dost it,
Let me arrest thy thoughts; wonder with mee,
Why plowing, building, ruling and the rest,
Or most of those arts, whence our lives are blest,
By cursed Cains race invented be,
And blest Seth vext us with Astronomie,
Ther’s nothing simply good, nor ill alone,
Of every quality comparison,
The onely measure is, and judge, opinion.

THE ANNIVERSARIES

CONTENTS

A FUNERAL ELEGY.
THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY.
THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY

A FUNERAL ELEGY.

‘Tis loss, to trust a tomb with such a guest,
Or to confine her in a marble chest.
Alas ! what’s marble, jet, or porphyry,
Prized with the chrysolite of either eye,
Or with those pearls and rubies which she was ?
Join the two Indies in one tomb, ‘tis glass ;
And so is all, to her materials,
Though every inch were ten Escurials ;
Yet she’s demolished ; can we keep her then
In works of hands, or of the wits of men ?
Can these memorials, rags of paper, give
Life to that name, by which name they must live ?
Sickly, alas ! short-lived, abortive be
Those carcase verses, whose soul is not she ;
And can she, who no longer would be she,
Being such a tabernacle stoop to be
In paper wrapp’d ; or when she would not lie
In such an house, dwell in an elegy ?
But ‘tis no matter ; we may well allow
Verse to live so long as the world will now,
For her death wounded it. The world contains
Princes for arms, and counsellors for brains,
Lawyers for tongues, divines for hearts, and more,
The rich for stomachs, and for backs the poor ;
The officers for hands, merchants for feet,
By which remote and distant countries meet ;
But those fine spirits, which do tune and set
This organ, are those pieces which beget
Wonder and love ; and these were she ; and she
Being spent, the world must needs decrepit be.
For since death will proceed to triumph still,
He can find nothing, after her, to kill,
Except the world itself, so great as she.
Thus brave and confident may nature be,

Death cannot give her such another blow,
Because she cannot such another show.
But must we say she's dead ? may 't not be said,
That as a sunder'd clock is piecemeal laid,
Not to be lost, but by the maker's hand
Repolish'd, without error then to stand,
Or as the Afric Niger stream enwombs
Itself into the earth, and after comes
— Having first made a natural bridge, to pass
For many leagues — far greater than it was,
May 't not be said, that her grave shall restore
Her, greater, purer, firmer than before ?
Heaven may say this, and joy in 't, but can we
Who live, and lack her here, this vantage see ?
What is 't to us, alas ! if there have been
An angel made a throne, or cherubin ?
We lose by 't : and as agèd men are glad
Being tasteless grown, to joy in joys they had,
So now the sick, starved world must feed upon
This joy, that we had her, who now is gone.
Rejoice then, nature, and this world, that you,
Fearing the last fires hastening to subdue
Your force and vigour, ere it were near gone,
Wisely bestow'd and laid it all on one ;
One, whose clear body was so pure and thin,
Because it need disguise no thought within ;
'Twas but a through-light scarf her mind to enroll,
Or exhalation breathed out from her soul ;
One whom all men, who durst no more, admired ;
And whom, whoe'er had worth enough, desired ;
As when a temple 's built, saints emulate
To which of them it shall be consecrate.
But as, when heaven looks on us with new eyes,
Those new stars every artist exercise ;
What place they should assign to them they doubt,
Argue, and agree not, till those stars go out ;
So the world studied whose this piece should be,

Till she can be nobody's else, nor she ;
But like a lamp of balsamum, desired
Rather to adorn than last, she soon expired.
Clothed in her virgin white integrity
— For marriage, though it doth not stain, doth dye —
To 'scape th' infirmities which wait upon
Woman, she went away before she was one ;
And the world's busy noise to overcome,
Took so much death as served for opium ;
For though she could not, nor could choose to die,
She hath yielded to too long an ecstasy.
He which, not knowing her sad history,
Should come to read the book of destiny,
How fair, and chaste, humble and high she'd been,
Much promised, much perform'd, at not fifteen,
And measuring future things by things before,
Should turn the leaf to read, and read no more,
Would think that either destiny mistook,
Or that some leaves were torn out of the book.
But 'tis not so ; fate did but usher her
To years of reason's use, and then infer
Her destiny to herself, which liberty
She took, but for thus much, thus much to die.
Her modesty not suffering her to be
Fellow-commissioner with destiny,
She did no more but die ; if after her
Any shall live, which dare true good prefer,
Every such person is her delegate,
To accomplish that which should have been her fate.
They shall make up that book, and shall have thanks
Of fate, and her, for filling up their blanks ;
For future virtuous deeds are legacies,
Which from the gift of her example rise ;
And 'tis in heaven part of spiritual mirth,
To see how well the good play her, on earth.

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY.

A N
A N A T O M I E
of the World.

Wherein,

B Y O C C A S I O N O F
the vntimely death of Mistris
E L I Z A B E T H D R V R Y,
the frailtie and the decay of
this whole World is
represented.

L O N D O N,

T O T H E P R A I S E
of the Dead, and the
A N A T O M Y.

WELL dy'de the World, that we might liue to see
This World of wit, in his Anatomee:
No euill wants his good: so wilder heyres;
Bedew their Fathers Toombs, with forced teares,
Whose state requites their losse: whiles thus we gaine
Well may we walke in blacke, but not complaine.
Yet how can I consent the world is dead
While this Muse liues? which in his spirits stead
Seemes to informe a world: and bids it bee,
In spight of losse, or fraile mortalitee?
And thou the subiect of this wel-borne thought,
Thrise noble Maid; couldst not haue found nor sought
A fitter time to yeeld to thy sad Fate,

Then whiles this spirit liues; that can relate
Thy worth so well to our last Nephews Eyne,
That they shall wonder both at his, and thine:
Admired match! where striues in mutuall grace
The cunning Pencill, and the comely face:
A taske, which thy faire goodnesse made too much
For the bold pride of vulgar pens to tuch;
Enough is vs to praise them that praise thee,
And say that but enough those prayses bee,
Which had'st thou liu'd, had hid their fearefull head
From th'angry checkings of thy modestred:
Death bars reward & shame: when enuy's gone,
And gaine; 'tis safe to giue the dead their owne.
As then the wise Egyptians wont to lay
More on their Tombes, then houses: these of clay,
But those of brasse, or marbele were; so wee
Giue more vnto thy Ghost, then vnto thee.
Yet what wee giue to thee, thou gauest to vs,
And maiest but thanke thy selfe, for being thus:
Yet what thou gau'st, and wert, O happy maid,
Thy grace profest all due, were 'tis repayd.
So these high songs that to thee suited bine,
Serue but to sound thy makers praise, in thine,
Which thy deare soule as sweetly sings to him
Amid the Quire of Saints and Seraphim,
As any Angels tongue can sing of thee;
The subiects differ, then the skill agree:
For as by infant-yeares men iudge of age,
Thy early loue, thy vertues, did presage
What hie part thou bear'st in those best songs
Whereto no burden, nor no end belongs.
Sing on thou Virgin soule, whose losseful gaine
Thy loue-sicke Parents haue bewail'd in vaine;
Neuer may thy Name be in our songs forgot.
Till we shall sing thy ditty, and thy note.

The First Anniversary.

A N
A N A T O M Y

of the World.

When that rich soule which to her heauen is gone,
Whom all doe celebrate, who know they haue one
(For who is sure he hath a soule, vnlesse
It see, and Iudge, and follow worthinesse,
And by Deedes praise it; Hee who doth not this,
May lodge an Inmate soule, but tis not his.)
When that Queene ended here her progresse time.
And, as t'her standing house, to heauen did clymbe,
Where loath to make the Saints attend her long,
Shee's now a part both of the Quire, and Song.
This, world, in that great earthquake languished;
For in a common Bath of teares it bled,
Which drew the strongest vitall spirits out:
But succour'd then with a perplexed doubt,
Whether the world did loose or gaine in this,
(Because since now no other way there is,
But goodnesse, to see her, whom all would see,
All must endeauour to bee good as shee.)
This great consumption to a feuer turn'd,
And so the world had fits; it ioy'd, it mournd,
And, as men thinke, that Agues Physicke are,
And the Ague being spent, giue ouer care,
So thou sicke world, mistak'st thy selfe to bee
Well, when alas, thou'rt in a Letargee.
Her death did wound and tame thee than, and than
Thou might'st haue better spar'd the Sunne, or Man.
That wound was deepe, but 'tis more misery,

That thou hast lost thy sense and memory.
T’was heauy then to heare thy voice of mone,
But this is worse, that thou art speechlesse growne.
Thou hast forgot thy name, thou hadst; thou wast
Nothing but she, and her thou hast o’repast.
For as a child kept from the Fount, vntill
A Prince, expected long, come to fulfill
The Cermonies, thou vnnam’d hadst laid,
Had not her comming, thee her Palace made:
Her name defin’d thee, gaue thee forme and frame,
And thou forget’st to celebrate thy name.
Some moneths shee hath bene dead (but being dead,
Measures of times are all determined)
But long shee’ath beene away, long, long, yet none
Offers to tell vs who it is that’s gone.
But as in states doubtfull of future heyres,
When sicknesse without remedy, empayres
The present Prince, they’re loth it should be said,
The Prince doth languish, or the Prince is dead:
So mankinde feeling now a generall thaw,
A strong example gone equall to law.
The Cyment which did faithfully compact
And glue all vertues, now resolu’d, and slack’d,
Thought it was some blasphemy to say sh’ was dead;
Or that our weakness was discouered
In that confession; therefore spoke no more
Then tongues, the soule being gonne, the losse deplore.
But though it be too late to succour thee,
Sicke world, yea dead, yea putrified, since shee
Thy’ntrinsique Balme, and thy preseruatiue,
Can neuer be renew’d, thou neuer liue,
I (since no man can make thee liue) will trie,
What we may gaine by thy Anatomy.
Her death hath taught vs dearely, that thou art
Corrupt and mortall in thy purest part.
Let no man say, the world it selfe being dead,
Tis labour lost to haue discouered.

The worlds infirmities, since there is none
Aliue to study this dissection;

What life the world hath stil.

For there's a kind of world remaining still,
Though shee which did inanimate and fill
The world, begone, yet in this last long night,
Her Ghost doth walke, that is, a glimmering light,
A faint weake loue of vertue and of good
Reflects from her, on them which vnderstood
Her worth; And though she haue shut in all day,
The twi-light of her memory doth stay;
Which, from the carkasse of the old world, free
Creates a new world; and new creatures bee
Produc'd: The matter and the stuffe of this,
Her vertue, and the forme our practise is.
And thought to be thus Elemented, arme
These creatures, from hom-borne intrinsique harme,
(For all assumed vnto this Dignitee,
So many weedlesse Paradises bee,
Which of themselues produce no venemous sinne,
Except some forraine Serpent bring it in)
Yet, because outward stormes the strongest breake,
And strength it selfe by confidence growes weake,
This new world may be safer, being told.

The sickenesse of the world

Impossibility of health.

The dangers and diseases of the old:
For with due temper men doe then forgoe,
Or couet things, when they their true worth know.
There is no health; Phisitians say that we
At best, enioy, but a neutralitee.
And can there be worse sicknes, then to know

That we are neuer well, nor can be so?
We are borne ruinous: poore mothers cry,
That children come not right, nor orderly:
Except they headlong come and fall vpon
An ominous precipitation.
How witty's ruine? how impotunate
Vpon mankinde? It labour'd to frustrate
Euen Gods purpose; and made woman, sent
For mans reliefe, cause of his languishment.
They were to good ends, and they are so still,
But accessory, and principall in ill.
For that first mariage was our funerall:
One woman at one blow, then kill'd vs all,
And singly, one by one, they kill vs now.
We doe delightfully our selues allow
To that consumption; and profusely blinde,
We kill ourselues, to propagate our kinde.
And yet we doe not that; we are not men:
There is not now that mankinde, which was then
When as the Sun, and man, did seeme to striue,

Shortnesse of life.

(Ioynt tenants of the world) who should suruiue.
When *Stag*, and Rauen, and the long liu'd tree,
Compar'd with man, dy'de in minoritee.
When, if a slow-pac'd starre had stolne away
From the obseruers marking, he might stay
Two or three hundred yeeres to see't againe,
And then make vp his obseruation plaine;
When, as the age was long, the sise was great:
Mans grouth confess'd, and recompenc'd the meat:
So spacious and large, that euery soule
Did a faire Kingdome, and large Realme controule:
And when the very stature thus erect,
Did that soule a good way towards Heauen direct.
Where is this mankind now? who liues to age,

Fit to be made *Methusalem* his page?
Alas, we scarse liue long enough to trie;
Whether a true made clocke run right, or lie.
Old Grandsires talke of yesterday with sorrow,
And for our children we reserue to morrow.
So short is life, that euery peasant striues,
In a torne house, or field, to haue three liues,
And as in lasting, so in length is man.

Smalenesse of stature.

Contracted to an inch, who was a span,
For had a man at first, in Forrests stray'd,
Or shipwrack'd in the Sea, one would haue laid
A wager that an Elephant, or Whale
That met him, would not hastily assaile
A thing so equall to him: now alasse.
The Fayries, and the Pigmies well may passe
As credible; mankind decayes so soone,
We're scarse our Fathers shadowes cast at noone.
Onely death addes t'our length: nor are we growne
In stature to be men, till we are none.
But this were light, did our lesse volumes hold
All the old Text; or had we chang'd to gold
Their siluer or dispos'd into lesse glas,
Spirits of vertue, which then scattred was.
But 'tis not so: w'are not retir'd, but dampt?
And as our bodies, so our minds are crampt:
Tis shrinking, not close weaning that hath thus,
In minde and body both be-dwarfed vs.
We seeme ambitious, Gods whole worke t'vndoe;
Of nothing he made vs, and we striue too,
To bring our selues to nothing backe; and we
Doe what we can, to do't so soone as he.
With new diseases on our selues we warre,
And with new Physicke, a worse Engin farre.
Thus man, this worlds Vice-Emperor, in whom

All faculties, all graces are at home;
And if in other creatures they appeare,
They’re but mans Ministers, and Legats there,
To worke on their rebellions, and reduce
Them to Ciuility, and to mans vse.
This man, whom God did woo, and loth t’attend
Till man came vp, did downe to man descend,
This man so great, that all that is, is his,
Oh what a trifle, and poore thing he is?
If man were any thing; he’s nothing now:
Helpe, or at least some time to wast, allow
T’his other wants, yet when he did depart
With her whom we lament, he lost his heart.
She, of whom th’Ancients seem’d to prophesie,
When they call’d vertues by the name of shee,
She in whom vertue was so much refin’d,
That for Allay vnto so pure a minde
She tooke the weaker Sex, she that could driue
The poysonous tincture, and the stayne of *Eue*,
Out of her thought, and deedes, and purifie
All, by a true religious Alchemy;
See, shee is dead; shee’s dead: when thou knowest this,
Thou knowest how poore a trifling thing man is.
And learn’st thus much by our Anatomee,
The heart being perish’d, no part can be free.
And that except thou feed (not banquet) on
The supernaturall food, Religion.
Thy better growth growes whithered, and scant;
Be more than man, or thou’rt lesse then an Ant.
Then, as mankinde, so is the worlds whole frame
Quite out of ioynt, almost created lame:
For, before God had made vp all the rest,
Corruption entred, and deprau’d the best:
It seis’d the Angels, and then first of all
The world did in her Cradle take a fall,
And turn’d her brains, and tooke a generall maime
Wronging each ioynt of th’vniuersall frame.

Decay of Nature in other parts.

The noblest part, man, felt it first; and than
Both beasts and plants, curst in the curse of man.
So did the world from the first houre decay,
That euening was beginning of the day,
And now the Springs and Sommers which we see,
Like sonnes of women after fifty bee.
And new Philosophy cals all in doubt,
The Element of fire is quite put out;
The Sunne is lost, and th'earth, and no mans wit
Can well direct him where to looke for it.
And freely men confesse that this world's spent,
When in the Planets, and the Firmament
They seeke so many new; they see that this
Is crumbled out againe to his Atomis.
'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone;
All iust supply, and all Relation:
Prince, Subiect, Father, Sonne, are things forgot,
For euery man alone thinkes he hath got
To be a Phoenix, and that then can be
None of that kinde, of which he is, but he.
This is the worlds condition now, and now
She that should all parts to reunion bow,
She that had all Magnetique force alone,
To draw, and fasten sundred parts in one;
She whom wise nature had inuented then
When she obseru'd that euery sort of men
Did in their voyage in this worlds Sea stray,
And needed a new compasse for their way;
Shee that was best, and first originall
Of all faire copies and the generall
Steward to Fate; shee whose rich eyes, and brest:
Guilt the West-Indies, and perfum'd the East;
Whose hauing breath'd in this world, did bestow
Spice on those Isles, and bad them still smell so,
And that rich Indie which doth gold interre,

Is but as single money, coyn’d from her:
She to whom this world must it selfe refer,
As Suburbs, or the Microcosme of her,
Shee, shee is dead; shee’s dead: when thou knowest this,
Thou knowst how lame a cripple this world is.
And learnst thus much by our Anatomy,
That this worlds generall sicknesse doth not lie
In any humour, or one certaine part;
But as thou sawest it rotten at the heart,
Thou seest a Hectique feuer hath got hold
Of the whole substance, not to be contrould.
And that thou hast but one way, not t’admit
The worlds infection, to be none of it.
For the worlds subtill immaterial parts
Feele this consuming wound, and ages darts.
For the worlds beauty is decayd, or gone,

Disformity of parts.

Beauty, that’s colour, and proportion.
We thinke the heauens enioy their Sphericall
Their round proportion embracing all.
But yet their various and perplexed course,
Obseru’d in diuerse ages doth enforce
Men to find out so many Eccentrique parts,
Such diuers downe-right lines, such ouerthwarts,
As disproportion that pure forme. It teares
The Firmament in eight and forty sheeres,
And in these constillations then arise
New starres, and old doe vanish from our eyes:
As though heau’n suffered earth quakes, peace or war,
When new Towers rise, and old demolish’t are.
They haue impayld within a Zodiake
The free-borne Sun, and keepe twelue signes awake
To watch his stepps; the Goat and Crabbe controule,
And fright him backe, who els to either Pole,
(Did not these Tropiques fetter him) might runne:

For his course is not round; nor can the Sunne
Perfit a Circle, or maintaine his way
One inche direct; but where he rose to day
He comes no more, but with a cousening line,
Steales by that point, and so is Serpentine:
And seeming weary with his reeling thus,
He meanes to sleepe, being now falne nearer vs.
So, of the Starres which boast that they doe runne.
In Circle still, none ends where he begunne.
All their proportion's lame, it sinckes, it swels.
For of Meridians, and Parallels,
Man hath weaued out a net, and this net throwne
Vpon the Heauens, and now they are his owne.
Loth to goe vp the hill, or labour thus
To goe to heauen, we make heauen come to vs.
We spur, we raigne the stars, and in their race
They're diuersly content t'obey our peace,
But keepes the earth her round proportion still?
Doth not a Tenerif, or higher Hill
Rise so high like a Rocke, that one might thinke
The floating Moone would shipwracke there, and sinke?
Seas are so deepe, that Whales being strooke to day,
Perchance too morrow, scarse at middle way
Of their wish'd iorneys ende, the bottom, die.
And men, to sound depths, so much line vntie,
As one might iustly thinke, that there would rise
At end thereof, one of th'Antipodies:
If vnder all, a Vault infernall be,
(Which sure is spacious, except that we
Invent another torment, that there must
Millions into a strait hot roome be thrust)
Then solidnesse, and roundnesse haue no place.
Are these but warts, and pock-holes in the face
Of th'earth? Thinke so: But yet confesse, in this
The worlds proportion disfigured is,
That those two legges whereon it doth rely,
Reward and punishment are bent awry.

And, Oh, it can no more be questioned,
That beauties best, proportion, is dead,
Since euen griefe it selfe, which now alone
Is left vs, is without proportion.
Shee by whose lines proportion should bee
Examin'd measure of all Symmetree,
Whom had the Ancient seene, who thought soules made
Of Harmony, he would at next haue said
That Harmony was shee, and thence infer.
That soules were but Resultances from her,
And did from her into our bodies goe,
As to our eyes, the formes from obiects flow:
Shee, who if those great Doctors truely said
That the Arke to mans proportion was made,
Had beene a type for that, as that might be
A type of her in this, that contrary
Both Elements and Passions liu'd at peace
In her, who cau'd all Ciuill war to cease.
Shee, after whom, what forme soe're we see,
Is discord, and rude incongruitee,
Shee, shee is dead, she's dead; when thou knowest this,
Thou knowst how vgly a monster this world is:
And learnest thus much by our Anatomee,
That here is nothing to enamour thee:
And that, not onely faults in inward parts,
Corruptions in our brains, or in our hearts.
Poysoning the fountaines, whence our actions spring,
Endanger us: but that if euery thing
Be not done fitly'nd in proportion,
To satisfie wise, and good lookers on,
(Since most men be such as most thinke they bee)
They're lothsome too, by this Deformitee.
For good, and well, must in our actions meete;
Wicked is not much worse then indiscreet.
But beauties other second Element,
Colour, and lustre now, is as neere spent.
And had the world his iust proportion,

Were it a ring still, yet the stone is gone.
As a compassionate Turcoyse which doth tell
By looking pale, the wearer is not well,
As gold fals sicke being stung with Mercury,
All the worlds parts of such complexion bee.
When nature was most busie, the first weeke,
Swadling the new borne earth God seemd to like,
That she should sport her selfe sometimes, and play,
To mingle, and vary colours euery day.
And then, as though she could not make inow
Himselfe his various Rainbow did allow,
Sight is the noblest sense of any one,
Yet sight hath onely colour to feede on,
And colour is decayd: summers robe growes
Duskie, and like an oft dyed garment showes.
Our blushing redde, which vs'd in cheekes to spred,
Is inward sunke and onely our soules are redde.
Perchance the world might haue recouered,
If shee whom we lament had not bene dead:
But she, in whom all white, and red, and blew
(Beauties ingredients) voluntary grew,
As in an vnuext Paradise; from whom
Did all things verdure, and their lustre come,
Whose composition was miraculous,
Being all colour, all Diaphanous,
(For Ayre, and Fire but thinke grosse bodies were,
And liueliest stones but drowsie, and pale to her,)
Shee, shee, is dead; she's dead: when thou knowest this,
Thou knowest how wan a Ghost this our world is:
And learnst thus much by our Anatomee,
That it should more affright, then pleasure thee.
And that, since all faire colour then did sinke,
'Tis now but wicked vanitie to thinke,

Weakenesse in the want of correspondence of heauen & earth.

To colour vicious deeds with good pretence,
Or with bought colors to illude mens sense.
Nor in ought more this worlds decay appeares,
Then that her influence the heau'n forbeares,
Or that the Elements doe not feele this,
The father, or the mother barren is.
The clouds conceiue not raine, or doe not powre
In the due birth-time, down the balmy showre.
Th'Ayre doth not motherly sit on the earth,
To hatch her seasons, and giue all things birth.
Spring-times were common cradles, but are toombes,
And false conceptions fill the generall wombes.
Th'ayre showes such Meteors, as none can see,
Not onely what they meane, but what they bee.
Earth such new wormes, as would haue troubled much,
Th'Egyptian *Mages* to haue made more such.
What Artist now dares boast that he can bring
Heauen hither, or constellate any thing,
So as the influence of those starres may bee
Imprisoned in an Hearbe, or Charme, or Tree.
And doe by touch, all which those starres could doe?
The art is lost, and correspondence too.
For heauen giues little, and the earth takes lesse,
And man least knowes their trades and purposes.
If this commerce twixt heauen and earth were not
Embarr'd, and all this trafique quite forgot,
Shee, for whose losse we haue lamented thus,
Would worke more fully and pow'rfully on vs.
Since herbes and roots by dying, lose not all,
But they, yea Ashes too, are medicinall,
Death could not quench her vertue so, but that
It would be (if not follow'd) wondred at:
And all the world would be one dying Swan,
To sing her generall praise, and vanish than.
But as some Serpents poyson hurteth not,
Except it be from the liue Serpent shot,
So doth her vertue need her here, to fit

That unto vs; she working more then it.
But she, in whom, to such maturity,
Verue was grown, past gtrouth, that it must die,
She from whose influence all Impresion came,
But by receiuers impotencies, lame,
Who, though she could not transubstantiate
All states to gold, yet guilded euery state,
So that some Princes haue some temperance;
Some Counsellors some purpose to aduance
The common profite; and some people haue
Some stay, no more then Kings should giue, to craue;
Some women haue some taciturnity,
Some Nunneries, some graines of chastity.
She that did thus much, & much more could doe,
But that our age was Iron, and rusty too,
Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowest this,
Thou knowest how drie a Cinder this world is.
And learnst thus much by our Anatomy,
That 'tis in vaine to dew, or mollifie
It with thy Teares, or Sweat, or Blood: no thing
Is worth our trauaile, griefe, or perishing,
But those rich ioyes, which did possesse her heart,
Of which shee's now partaker, and a part.

Conclusion.

But as in cutting vp a man that's dead,
The body will not last out to haue read
On euery part, and therefore men direct
Their speech to parts, that are of most effect;
So the worlds carcasse would not last, if I
Were punctuall in this Anatomy.
Nor smels it well to hearers, if one tell
Them their disease, who faine would thinke they're well.
Here therefore be the end: And, blessed maid,
Of whom is meant what euer hath beene said,
Or shall be spoken well by any tongue,

Whose name refines course lines, and makes prose song,
Accept this tribute, and his first yeeres rent,
Who till his darke short tapers end be spent,
As oft as thy feast sees this widowed earth,
Will yeerely celebrate thy second birth,
That is, thy death. For though the soule of man
Be got when man is made, ‘tis borne but than
When man doth die, Our bodi’s as the wombe,
And as a Mid-wife death directs it home.
And you her creatures, whom she workes vpon
And haue your last, and best concoction
From her example, and her vertue, if you
In reuerence to her, doe thinke it due,
That no one should her prayses thus reherse,
As matter fit for Chronicle, not verse,
Vouchsafe to call to minde, that God did make
A last, and lastingst peece, a song. He spake
To *Moses*, to deliuer vnto all,
That song: because he knew they would let fall,
The Law, the Prophets, and the History,
But keepe the song still in their memory.
Such an opinion (in due measure) made
Me this great Office boldly to inuade.
Nor could incomprehensiblenesse deterre
Me, from thus trying to emprison her.
Which when I saw that a strict graue could doe,
I saw not why verse might not doe so too.
Verse hath a middle nature: Heauen keepes soules,
The Graue keepes bodies, Verse the fame enroules.

THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY

O F
T H E P R O G R E S
of the Soule.

Wherein,
B Y O C C A S I O N O F
The Religious death of Mistris
E L I Z A B E T H D R V R Y,
the incommodities of the Soule
in this life, and her exaltation in
the next, are Contem-
plated.

L O N D O N

THE HARBINGER
to the Progresse.

TWO soules moue here, and mine (a third) must moue
Paces of admiration, and of loue;
Thy soule (Deare Virgin) whose this tribute is,
Mou'd from this mortall sphere to liuely blisse,
And yet moues still, and still aspires to see
The worlds last day, thy glories full degree:
Like as those starres which thou ore-lookest farre,
Are in their place, and yet still moued are
No soule (whiles with the luggage of this clay
It clogged is) can follow thee halfe way;
Or see thy flight; which doth our thoughts outgoe
So fast, that now the lightning moues but slow:
But now thou art as high in heauen flowne
As heau'ns from vs; what soule besides thine owne
Can tell thy ioyes, or say he can relate
Thy glorious Iornals in that blessed state?

I enuie thee (Rich soule) I enuy thee,
Although I cannot yet thy glory see:
And thou (Great spirit) which her's follow'd hast
So fast, as none can follow thine so fast;
So farre as none can follow thine so farre,
(And if this flesh did not the passage barre
Had'st caught her) let me wonder at thy flight
Which long agone had'st lost the vulgar sight
And now mak'st proud the better eyes, that they
Can see thee les'ned in thine aery way;
So while thou mak'st her soule by progresse knowne
Thou mak'st a noble progresse of thine owne.
From this worlds carcasse hauing mounted hie
To that pure life of Immortalitie;
Since thine aspiring thoughts themselues so raise
That more may not beseeme a creatures praise,
Yet still thou vow'st her more; and euery yeare
Mak'st a new Progresse, while thou wandrest here;
Still vpward mount; and let thy makers praise
Honor thy Laura, and adorne thy laies.
And since thy Muses head in heauen shrouds
Oh let her neuer stoope below the clouds:
And if those glorious sainted soules may know
Or what we doe, or what we sing below,
Those acts, those songs shall still content them best
Which praise those awfull powers that make them blest.

THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY

O F
T H E P R O G R E S
of the Soule.

NOTHING could make me sooner to confesse.

The entrance.

That this world had an euerlastingnesse,
Then to consider, that a yeare is runne,
Since both this lower worlds, and the Sunnes, Sunne,
The Lustre, and the vigor of this All,
Did set; t'were Blasphemy, to say, did fall.
But as a ship which hath strooke saile, doth runne,
By force of that force which before, it wonne:
Or as sometimes in a beheaded man,
Though at those two Red seas, which freely ran,
One from the Trunke, another from the Head,
His soule he saild, to her eternall bed,
His eies will twinckle, and his tongue will roll,
As though he beckned, and cal'd backe his Soul,
He graspes his hands, and he puls vp his feet,
And seemes to reach, and to step forth to meet
His soule; when all these motions which we saw,
Are but as Ice, which crackles at a thaw:
Or as a lute, which in moist weather, rings
Her knell alone, by cracking of her strings.
So strugles this dead world, now shee is gone;
For there is motion in corruption.
As some Daies are, at the Creation nam'd,
Before the Sunne, the which fram'd Daies, was fram'd,
So after this Sunnes set some show appeares,
And orderly vicissitude of yeares.
Yet a new Deluge, and of *Lethe* flood,

Hath drown’vs all, All haue forgot all good,
Forgetting her, the maine Reserue of all,
Yet in this Deluge, grosse and generall,
Thou seest me striue for life; my life shall be,
To bee hereafter prais’d, for praysing thee,
Immortall Maid, who though thou wouldst refuse
The name of Mother, be vnto my Muse,
A Father since her chaste ambition is,
Yearely to bring forth such a child as this.
These Hymnes may worke on future wits, and so
May great Grand-children of thy praises grow.
And so, though not Reuiue, enbalme, and spice
The world which else would putrifie with vice.
For thus, Man may extend thy progeny,
Vntill man doe but vanish, and not die.
These Hymns they issue, may encrease so long,
As till Gods great *Venite* change the song.
Thirst for that time, O my initiate soule,

A iust dis-estimation of this world.

And serue thy thirst, with Gods safe-sealing Bowle.
Bee thirsty still, and drinke still till thou goe;
To th’onely Health, to be Hydroptique so.
Forget this rotten world; And vnto thee,
Let thine owne times as an old story be.
Be not concern’d: study not why, nor whan;
Doe not so much, as not beleeue a man.
For though to erre, be worst, to try truths forth,
Is far more busines, then this world is worth.
The world is but a carcasse; thou art fed
By it, but as a worme, that carcas bred;
And why shouldst thou, poore worme, consider more,
When this world will grow better then before,
Then those thy fellow-wormes doe thinke vpone
That carcasses last resurrectione.
Forget this world, and scarse thinke of it so,

As of old cloaths, cast off a yeere agoe.
To be thus stupid as Alacrity;
Men thus lethargique haue best Memory.
Looke vpward; that's towards her, whose happy state
We now lament not, but congratulate.
Shee, to whom all this world twas but a stage,
Where all sat harkning how her youthfull age
Should be emploid, because in all, shee did,
Some Figure of the Golden times, was hid.
Who could not lacke, what ere this world could giue,
Because shee was the forme, that made it liue;
Nor could complaine, that this world was vnfit,
To be staid in, then when shee was in it;
Shee that first tried indifferent desires
By vertue, and vertue by religious fires,
Shee to whose person Paradise adhear'd,
As Courts to Princes, she whose eies enspheard
Star-light inough, t'haue made the South controll,
(Had shee beene there) the Starfull Northern Pole,
Shee, shee is gone; shee is gone; when thou knowest this,
What fragmentary rubbidge this world is.
Thou knowest, and that it is not worth a thought;
He honours it too much that thinkes it nought.
Thinke then, My soule, that death is but a Groome,

Contemplation of our state in our death-bed.

Which brings a Taper to the outward roome,
Whence thou spiest first a glimmering light,
And after brings it nearer to thy sight:
For such approches doth heauen make it in death.
Thinke thy selfe labouring now with broken breath,
And thinke those broken & soft Notes to bee
Diuision, and thy happiest Harmonee.
Thinke thee laid on thy death-bed, loose and slacke;
And thinke that but vnbinding of a packe,
To take one precious thing, thy soule, from thence.

Thinke thy selfe parch’d with feuers violence,
Anger thine Ague more, by calling it
Thy Physicke; chide the slacknes of the fit.
Thinke that thou hear’st thy knell, and thinke no more,
But that, as Bels cal’d thee to Church before,
So this, to the Triumphant Church, cals thee.
Thinke Satans Sergeants round about thee bee,
And thinke that but for Legcies they thrust;
Giue one thy Pride, to ‘another giue thy Lust:
Giue them those sinnes which they gaue before,
And trust th’immaculate blood to wash thy score.
Thinke thy friends weeping round, and thinke that thay
Weepe but because they goe not yet thy way.
Thinke they confesse much in the world, amisse
Who dare not trust a dead mans eye with that,
Which they from God, and Angels couer not.
Thinke that they shourd thee vp, and thinke from thence
They reinuest thee in white innocence.
Thinke that thy body rots, and (if so lowe,
Thy soule exhalted so, thy thoughts can goe.)
Thinke thee a Prince, who of themselues create
Wormes which insensibly deuoure their state.
Thinke that they bury thee, and thinke that right
Laies thee to sleepe but a Saint Lucies night.
Thinke these things cheerfully: and if thou bee
Drowsie or slacke, remember then that shee,
She whose Complexion was so euen made,
That which of her Ingredients should inuade
The other three, no Feare, no Art could guesse:
So farre were all remou’d from more or lesse.
But as in Mithridate, or iust perfumes,
Where all good things being met, no one presumes
To gouerne, or to triumph on the rest,
Onely because all were, no part was best.
And as, though all doe know, that quantities
Are made of lines, and lines from Points arise,
None can these lines or quantities vnioynt,

And say this is a line, or this a point,
So though the Elements and Humors were
In her, one could not say, this gouerns there.
Whose euen constitution might haue worne
Any disease to venter on the Sunne,
Rather then her: and make a spirit feare
That he to disuniting subiect were.
To whose proportions if we would compare
Cubes, th'are vnstable, Circles, Angulare,
Shee who was such a Chaine, as Fate emploies
To bring mankind, all Fortunes it enioyes,
So fast, so euen wrought, as one would thinke,
No accident, could threaten any linke,
Shee, shee embrac'd a sicknesse, gaue it meat,
The purest Blood, and Breath, that ere it eat.
And hath taught vs that though a good man hath
Title to Heauen, and plead it by his Faith,
And though he may pretend a conquest, since
Heauen was content to suffer violence,
Yea though he plead a long possesion too,
(For they're in heauen on earth, who heauens workes do,)
Though he had right, & power and place before,
Yet Death must vsher, and vnlocke the doore.
Thinke further on thy selfe, my soule, and thinke;
How thou at first was made but in a sinke;
Thinke that it argued some infermitee,
That those two soules, which then thou foundst in mee,
Thou fedst upon, and drewst into thee, both
My second soule of sence, and first of growth.
Thinke but how poore thou wast, how obnoxious;
Whom a small lumpe of flesh could poyson thus.
This curded milke, this poore vnlittered whelpe
My body, could, beyound escape, or helpe,
Infect thee with originall sinne, and thou
Couldst neither then refuse, nor leaue it now.
Thinke that no stubborne sullen Anchorit,
Which fixt to'a Pillar, or a Graue doth sit

Bedded and Bath'd in all his Ordures, dwels
So fowly as our soules, in their first-built Cels.
Thinke in how poore a prison thou didst lie
After, enabled but to sucke, and crie.
Thinke, when t'was growne to most, t'was a poore Inne,
A Prouince Pack'd vp in two yards of skinne.
And that vsurped, or threatned with the rage
Of sicknesses, or their true mother, Age.
But thinke that Death hath now enfranchis'd thee,

Her liberty by death.

Thou hast thy'expansion now and libertee;
Thinke that a rusty Peece, discharg'd, is flowen
In peeces, and the bullet is his owne,
And freely flies: This to thy soule allow,
Thinke thy sheell broke, thinke thy Soule hatch'd but now.
And think this slow-pac'd soule, which late did cleaue,
To a'body, and went but by the bodies leaue,
Twenty, perchance, or thirty mile a day,
Dispatches in a minute all the way,
Twixt Heauen, and Earth: shee staies not in the Ayre,
To looke what Meteors there themselues prepare;
Shee carries no desire to know, nor sense,
Whether th'Ayrs middle Region be intense,
For th'Element of fire, shee doth not know,
Whether shee past by such a place or no;
Shee baits not at the Moone, nor cares to trie,
Whether in that new world, men liue, and die.
Venus recards her not, to'enquire, now shee
Can, (being one Star) Hesper, and Vesper bee,
Hee that charm'd Argus eyes, sweet Mercury,
Workes not on her, who now is growen al Ey;
Who, if shee meete the body of the Sunne,
Goes through, not staying till his course be runne;
Who finds in Mars his Campe, no corps of Guard;
Nor is by Ioue, nor by his father bard;

But ere she can consider how she went,
At once is at, and through the Firmament.
And as these starres were but so many beades
Strunge on one string, speed vndistinguish'd leades
Her through those spheares, as through the beades, a string,
Whose quicke succession makes it still one thing:
As doth the Pith, which, least our Bodies slacke,
Strings fast the little bones of necke, and backe;
So by the soule doth death string Heauen and Earth.
For when our soule enioyes this her third birth,
(Creation gaue her one, a second, grace,)
Heauen is as neare, and present to her face,
As colours are, and obiects, in a roome
Where darkenesse was before, when Tapers come.
This must, my soule, thy long-short Progresse bee;
To'aduance these thoughts, remember then, that shee
Shee, whose faire body no such prison was,
But that a soule might well be pleas'd to passe
An age in her; she whose rich beauty lent
Mintage to others beauties, for they went
But for so much, as they were like to her;
Shee, in whose body (if we dare prefer
This low world, to so high a marke, as shee,)
The Westerne treasure, Esterne spiceree,
Europe, and Afrique, and the vnknowen rest
Were easily found, or what in them was best;
And when w'haue made this large Discoueree.
Of all in her some one part then will bee
Twenty such patts, whose plenty and riches is
Inough to make twenty such worlds as this,
Shee, whom they had knowne who did first betroth
The Tutelar Angel, and assigned one, both
To Nations, Cities, and to Companies,
To Functions, Offices, and Dignities,
And to each seuerall man, to him, and him,
They would haue giuen her one for euery limme;
Shee, of whose soule, if we may say, t'was Gold,

Her body was th'Electrum, and did hold
Many degrees of that; (we vnderstood
Her by the sight, her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheekes, and so distinctly wrought,
That one might almost say, her body thought,
Shee, shee, thus richly, & largely hous'd, is gone:
& chides vs slow-pac'd snailes who crawl vpon
Our prisons prison, earth, nor thinke vs well
Longer, then whil'st we beare our brittle shell.
But t'were but little to haue chang'd our roome,

Her ignorance in this life and knowledge in the next.

If, as we were in this our liuing Toombe
Oppress'd with ignorance, we still were so,
Poore soule in this thy flesh what do'st thou know.
Thou know'st thy selfe so little, as thou know'st not,
How thou didst die, nor how thou wast begot.
Thou neither know'st, how thou at first came in,
Nor how thou took'st the poyson of mans sin.
Nor dost thou, (though thou knowst, that thou art so)
By what way thou art made immortall, know.
Thou art to narrow, wretch, to comprehend
Euen thy selfe: yea though thou wouldst but bend
To know thy body. Haue not all soules thought
For many ages, that our body'is wrought
Of Ayre, and Fire, and other Elements?
And now they thinke of new ingredients.
And one soule thinkes one, and another way
Another thinkes, and ty's an euen lay.
Know'st thou but how the stone doth enter in
The bladders Caue, and neuer brake the skin?
Knowst thou how blood, which to the heart doth flow,
Doth from one ventricle to th'other goe?
And for the putrid stuffe, which thou dost spit,
Knowst how thy lungs haue attracted it?
There are no passages so that there is

(For ought thou knowst) piercing of substances.
And of those many opinions which men raise
Of Nayles and Haires, dost thou know which to praise?
What hope haue we to know our selves, when we
Know not the least things, which for our vse be?
We see in Authors, too stiffe to recant.
A hundred controuersies of an Ant.
And yet one watches, starues, freeses, and sweats,
To know but Catechismes and Alphabets
Of vnconcerning things, matters of fact;
How others on our stage their parts did Act;
What *Cæsar* did, yea, and what *Cicero* said.
Why grasse is greene, or why our blood is red,
Are mysteries which none haue reach'd vnto.
In this low forme, poore soule what wilt thou doe?
When wilt thou shake off this Pedantery,
Of being thought by sense, and Fantasy
Thou look'st through spectacles; small things seeme great,
Below; But vp vnto the watch-towre get,
And see all things despoyld of fallacies:
Thou shalt not peepe though lattices of eies,
Nor heare through Laberinths of eares, nor learne
By circuit, or collections to discerne.
In heauen thou straight know'st all, concerning it,
And what concerns it not, shall straight forget.
There thou (but in no other schoole) maist bee
Perchance, as learned, and as full, as shee,
Shee who all Libraries had throughly red
At home, in her own thoughts, and practised
So much good as would make as many more:
Shee whose example they must all implore,
Who would or doe, or thinke well, and confesse
That aie the vertuous Actions they expresse,
Are but a new, and worse edition,
Of her some one thought, or one action:
Shee, who in th'Art of knowing Heauen, was growen
Here vpon Earth, to such perfection,

That shee hath, euer since to Heauen shee came,
(In a far fairer point,) but read the same:
Shee, shee, not satisfied withall this waite,
(For so much knowledge, as would ouer-fraite
Another, did but Ballast her) is gone,
As well t'enioy, as get perfectione.
And cals vs after her, in that shee tooke,
(Taking her selfe) our best, and worthiest booke.
Returne not, my soule, from this extasee,

Of our company in this life and in the next.

And meditation of what thou shalt bee,
To earthly thoughts, till it to thee appeare,
With whom thy conuersation must be there.
With whom wilt thou Conuerse? what station
Canst thou choose out, free from infection,
That will not giue thee theirs, nor drinke in thine?
Shalt thou not finde a spungy slacke Diuine
Drinke and sucke in th'Instructions of Great men,
And for the word of God, vent them agen?
Are there not some Courts, (And then, no things bee
So like as Courts) which, in this let vs see,
That wits and tongues of Libellars are weake,
Because they doe more ill, then these can speake?
The poyson'is gone though all, poysons affect
Chiefly the cheefest parts, but some effect
In Nailes, and Haires, yea excrements, will show,
So wise the poyson of sinne, in the most low.
Vp vp, my drowsie soule, where thy new eare
Shall in the Angels songs no discord heare;
Where thou shalt see the blessed Mother-maid
Ioy in not being that, which men haue said.
Where shee is exalted more for being good,
Then for her interest, of mother-hood.
Vp to those Patriarckes, which did longer sit
Expecting Christ, then they haue enioy'd him yet.

Vp to those Prophets, which now gladly see
Their Prophesies growen to be Historee.
Vp to th'Apostles, who did brauely runne,
All the Suns course, with more light then the Sunne.
Vp to those Martyrs, who did calmely bleed
Oyle to th'Apostles lamps, dew to their seed.
Vp to those Virgins, who thoughts that almost
They made ioyntenants with the Holy Ghost,
If they to any should his Temple giue.
Vp, vp, for in that squadron there doth liue
Shee, who hath carried thether, new degrees
Shee coynd, in this, that her impressions gaue
To all our actions all the worth they haue:
Shee gaue protections; the thoughts of her brest
Satans rude Officers could nere arrest.
As these prerogatiues being met in one,
Made her a Church; and these two made her all.
Shee who was all this All, and could not fall
To worse, by company; (for she was still
More Antidote, then all the world was ill,
Shee, shee doth leaue it, and by Death, suruiue
(As to their number) to their dignities.
Shee, who being to her selfe, a state enioyd
All royalties which any state emploid,
For shee made wars, and triumph'd, reason still
Did not ouerthrow, but rectifie her will:
And shee made peace, for no peace is like this,
That beauty and chastity together kisse:
Shee did high iustice; for shee crucified
Euery first motion of rebellious pride:
And shee gaue pardons, and was liberall,
For, onely her selfe except, shee pardond all:
All this, in Heauen; whether who doth not striue
The more, because shee's there, he doth not know
That accidentall ioyes in Heauen doe grow.

Of essentiall ioy in this life and in the next.

But pause, My soule, and study ere thou fall
On accidentall ioyes, th'essentiall.
Still before Accessories doe abide
A triall, must the principall be tride.
And what essentiall ioy canst thou expect
Here vpon earth? what permanent effect
Of transitory causes? Dost thou loue
Beauty? (And Beauty worthy'st is to moue)
Poore couse'ned cose'nor, that she, and that thou,
Which did begin to liue, are neither now.
You are both fluid, chang'd since yesterday;
Next day repaires, (but ill) last dayes decay.
Nor are, (Although the riuer keepe the name)
Yesterdayes waters, and to daies the same.
So flowes her face, & thine eies, neither now
That Saint, nor Pilgrime, which your louing row
Concernd, remaines, but whil'st you thinke you bee
Constant, you'are hourely in inconstancee.
Honour may haue pretence vnto our loue,
Because that God did liue so long aboue
Without this Honour, and then lou'd it so,
That he at last made Creatures to bestow
Honour on him; not that he needed it,
But that, to his hands, man might grow more fit.
But since all honours from inferiours flow,
(For they doe giue it; Princes doe but show
Whom they would haue so honord) and that this
On such opinions, and capacities
Is built, as rise, and fall, to more and lesse,
Alas, tis but a casuall happinesse.
Hath euer any man to'himselfe assigned
This or that happiness, to'arrest his minde,
But that another man, which takes a worse,
Thinke him a foole for hauing tane that course?
They who did labour Babels tower to'erect,
Might haue considered, that for that effect,
All this whole solid Earth could not allow

Nor furnish forth Materials enow;
And that his Center, to raise such a place
Was farre too little, to haue beene the Base;
No more affoords this worlds, foundatione
To erect true ioye, were all the meanes in one.
But as the Heathen made them seuerall gods,
Of all Gods Benefits, and all his Rods,
(For as the Wine, and Corne, and Onions are
Gods vnto them, so Agues bee, and warre)
And as by changing that whole precious Gold
To such small copper coynes, they lost the old,
And lost their onely God, who euer must
Be fought alone, and not in such a thrust,
So much mankind true happinesse mistakes;
No Ioye enioyes that man, that many makes.
Then, soule, to thy first pitch worke vpon againe;
Know that all lines which circles doe containe,
For once that they the Center touch, doe touch
Twice the circumference; and be thou such.
Double on heauen, thy thoughts on earth emploid;
All will not serue; Onely who haue enioyd
The sight of God, in fulnesse, can thinke it;
For it is both the obiect, and the wit.
This is essentiall ioye, where neither hee
Can suffer Diminution, nor wee;
Tis such a full, and such a filling good;
Had th'Angels once look'd on him, they had stood.
To fill the place of one of them, or more,
Shee whom we celebrate, is gone before.
Shee, who had Here so much essentiall ioy.
As no chance could distract, much lesse destroy;
Who with Gods presence was acquainted so,
(Hearing, and speaking to him) as to know
His face, in any naturall Stone, or Tree,
Better then when in Images they bee:
Who kept by diligent deuotion,
Gods Image, in such reparation,

Within her heart, that what decay was growen,
Was her first Parents fault, and not her own:
Who being solicited to any Act,
Still heard God pleading his safe precontract;
Who by a faithfull confidence, was here
Betrothed to God, and now is married there,
Whose twilights were more cleare, then our mid-day,
Who dreamt deuoutlier, then most vse to pray;
Who being here fild with grace, yet stroue to bee,
Both where more grace, & more capacitee
At once is giuen: she to Heauen is gone,
Who made this world in some proportion
A heauen, and here, became vnto vs all,
Ioye, (as our ioyes admit) essentiall.
But could this low world ioyes essentiall touch,

Of accidental ioyes in both places.

Heauens accidentall ioies would passe them much.
How poore and lame, must then our casuall bee?
If thy Prince will his subiects to call thee
My Lord, and this doe swell thee, thou art than,
By being a greater, growen to be lesse Man,
When no Physician of Reders can speake,
A ioyfull casuall violence may breake
A dangerous Apostem in thy brest;
And whilst thou ioyest in this, the dangerous rest,
The bag may rise vp, and so strangle thee.
What eye was casuall, may euer bee.
What should the Nature change? Or make the same
Certaine, which was but casuall, when it came?
All casuall ioye doth loud and plainly say,
Onely by comming, that it can away.
Onely in Heauen ioies strength is neuer spent;
And accidentall things are permanent.
Ioy of a soules arriuall neere decaies;
For that soule euer ioyes & euer staies.

Ioy that their last great Consummation
Approches in the resurrection;
When earthly bodies more celestiall
Shalbe, then Angels were, for they could fall;
This kind of ioy doth euery day admit
Degrees of grouth, but none of loosing it.
In this fresh ioy, tis no small part, that shee,
Shee, in whose goodnesse, he that names degree,
Doth iniure her; (Tis losse to be cald best,
There where the stuffe is not such as the rest)
Shee, who left such a body, as euen shee
Onely in Heauen could learne, how it can bee
Made better; for shee rather was two soules,
Or like to full, on both sides written Rols,
Where eies might read vpon the outward skin,
As strong Records for God, as mindes within,
Shee, who by making a full perfection grow,
Peeces a Circle, and still keepes it so,
Long'd for, and longing for'it, to heauen is gon,
Where shee receiues, and giues addition.

Conclusion.

Here in a place, where mis-deuotion frames
A thousand praiers to Saints, whose very names
The ancient Church knew not, Heauen knowes not yet,
And where, what lawes of Poetry admit,
Lawes of Religion, haue at least the same,
Immortall Maid, I might inuoke thy name.
Could any Saint prouoke that appetit,
Thou here shouldst make mee a french conuertite.
But thou wouldst not; nor wouldst thou be content,
To take this, for my second yeeres true Rent,
Did this Coine beare any other stampe, then his,
That gaue thee power to doe me, to say this.
Since his will is, that to posteritee,
Thou shouldest for life, & death, a patterne bee,

And that the world should notice haue of this,
The purpose, and th’Authority is his;
Thou art the Proclamation, and I ame
The Trumpet, at whose voice the people came.

FINIS

LATIN POEMS

CONTENTS

DE LIBRO CUM MUTUARETUR IMPRESSO
AMICISSIMO, ET MERITISSIMO BEN. JOHNSON
TO MR. GEORGE HERBERT
A SHEAF OF SNAKES
TRANSLATED OUT OF GAZÆUS, VOTA AMICO FACTA. FOL.160

DE LIBRO CUM MUTUARETUR IMPRESSO

DOMI A PUERIS FRUSTATIM LACERATO; ET POST REDDITO MANUSCRIPTO

Doctissimo Amicissimoque V.

D. D. Andrews

PARTURIUNT madido quae nixu praela, recepta,
Sed quae scripta manu, sunt veneranda magis,
Qui liber in pluteos, blattis cinerique relictos,
Si modo sit praeli sanguine tinctus, abit;
Accedat calamo scriptus, reverenter habetur,
Involat et veterum scrinia summa Patrum.
Dicat Apollo modum; Pueros infundere libro
Nempe vetustatem canitiemque novo.
Nil mirum, medico pueros de semine natos,
Haec nova fata libro posse dedisse novo.
Si veterem faciunt pueri, qui nuperus, Annon
Ipse Pater juvenem me dabit arte senem?
Hei miseris senibus! nos vertit dura senectus
Omnes in pueros, neminem at in juvenem.
Hoc tibi servasti praestandum, Antique Dierum,
Quo viso, et vivit, et juvenescit Adam.
Interea, infirmae fallamus taedia vitae,
Libris, et Coelorum aemulâ amicitiâ.
Hos inter, qui a te mihi redditus iste libellus,
Non mihi tam charus, tam meus, ante fuit.

EPIGRAMMA
Transiit in Sequanam Moenus; Victoris in aedes;
Et Francofurtum, te revehente, meat.

AMICISSIMO, ET MERITISSIMO BEN. JOHNSON

In Vulponem

QUOD arte ausus es hic tuâ, Poeta,
Si auderent hominum Deique juris
Consulti, veteres sequi aemularierque,
O omnes saperemus ad salutem.
His sed sunt veteres araneosi;
Tam nemo veterum est sequutor, ut tu
Illos quod sequeris novator audis.
Fac tamen quod agis; tuique prima
Libri canitie induantur horâ:
Nam chartis pueritia est neganda,
Nascanturque senes, oportet, illi
Libri, queis dare vis perennitatem.
Priscis, ingenium facit, laborque
Te parem; hos superes, ut et futuros,
Ex nostrâ vitiositate sumas,
Quâ priscos superamus, et futuros.

TO MR. GEORGE HERBERT

With one of my seals, of the anchor and Christ

QUI prius assuetus Serpentum fasce Tabellas
Signare, (haec nostrae symbola parva Domus)
Adscitus domui Domini, patrioque relicto
Stemmate, nanciscor stemmata jure nova.
Hinc mihi Crux primo quae fronti impressa lavacro,
Finibus extensis, anchora facta patet.
Anchorae in effigiem Crux tandem desinit ipsam,
Anchora fit tandem Crux tolerata diu.
Hoc tamen ut fiat, Christo vegetatur ab ipso
Crux, et ab Affixo, est Anchora facta, jesu.
Nec Natalitiis pen;tus serpentibus orbor,
Non ita dat Deus, ut auferat ante data.
Quâ sapiens, Dos est; Quâ terram lambit et ambit,
Pestis; At in nostra fit Medicina Cruce,
Serpens; fixa Cruci si sit Natura; Crucique
A fixo, nobis, Gratia tota fluat.
Omnia cum Crux sint, Crux Anchora facta, sigillum
Non tam dicendum hoc quam Catechismus erit.
Mitto nec exigua, exiguft sub imagine, dona,
Pignora amicitiae, et munera; Vota, preces.
Plura tibi accumulet, sanctus cognominis, Ille
Regia qui flavo Dona sigillat Equo.

A SHEAF OF SNAKES

A SHEAFE Of Snakes used heretofore to be
My Seal, The Crest of our poore Family.
Adopted in Gods Family, and so
Our old Coat lost, unto new armes I go.
The Crosse (my seal at Baptism) spred below,
Does, by that form, into an Anchor grow.
Crosses grow Anchors; Bear, as thou shouldst do
Thy Crosse, and that Crosse grows an Anchor too.
But he that makes our Crosses Anchors thus,
Is Christ, who there is crucifi'd for us.
Yet may I, with this, my first Serpents hold,
God gives new blessings, and yet leaves the old;
The Serpent, may, as wise, my pattern be;
My poison, as be feeds on dust, that's me.
And as he rounds the Earth to murder sure,
My death he is, but on the Crosse, my cure.
Crucifie nature then, and then implore
All Grace from him, crucified there before;
When all is Crosse, and that Crosse Anchor grown,
This Seal's a Catechism, not a Seal alone.
Under that little Seal great gifts I send,
[Wishes,] and prayers, pawns, and fruits of a friend.
And may that Saint which rides in our great Seal,
To you, who bear his name, great bounties deal.

TRANSLATED OUT OF GAZÆUS, VOTA AMICO FACTA. FOL.160

GOD grant thee thine own wish, and grant thee mine,
Thou, who dost, best friend, in best things outshine;
May thy soul, ever chearfull, nere know cares,
Nor thy life, ever lively, know gray haires.
Nor thy hand, ever open, know base holds,
Nor thy purse, ever plump, know pleits, or folds.
Nor thy tongue, ever true, know a false thing,
Nor thy word, ever mild, know quarrelling.
Nor thy works, ever equall, know disguise,
Nor thy fame, ever pure, know contumelies.
Nor thy prayers, know low objects, still Divine;
God grant thee thine own wish, and grant thee mine.

DOUBTFUL VERSES

These 24 spurious poems were unlikely to have been written by Donne, but appeared at various times after his death. Several of the poems contain similar themes to his famous works, e.g. *On a Flea on his Mistress's Bosom*, but they are inferior imitations of Donne's own poetic wit.

Please note: these poems are not included in the following alphabetical and chronological contents tables.

CONTENTS

Absence
Love’s War
On a Flea on his Mistress’s Bosom
The Portrait
Love-Sonnet (I.)
Love-Sonnet (II.)
A Warning
To the Young Gentlewomen
Believe your Glass
Fortune never Fails
To Mrs. Boulstred
To a Painted Lady
Love’s Power
Love and Reason
To a Lady of a Dark Complexion
Borrowing
Supping Hours
The Smith
The Lady and her Viol
A Paradox
Sun, Begone
If She Deride
Love and Wit
Dr. Donne’s Farewell to the World

Absence

That time and absence proves
Rather helps than hurts to loves.

ABSENCE, hear thou my protestation
Against thy strength,
Distance, and length;
Do what thou canst for alteration,

For hearts of truest mettle
Absence doth join and time doth settle.

Who loves a mistress of such quality,
His mind hath found

Affection's ground
Beyond time, place; and all mortality;
To hearts that cannot vary
Absence is present, Time doth tarry.

My senses want their outward motion,
Which now within
Reason doth win,
Redoubled by her secret notion;
Like rich men that take pleasure
In hiding more than handling treasure.

By absence this good means I gain,
That I can catch her,
Where none can watch her,
In some close corner of my brain;
There I embrace and kiss her,
And so enjoy her, and none miss her.

Love’s War

TILL I have peace with thee, war other men,
And when I have peace, can I leave thee then?
All other wars are scrupulous; only thou
O free fair city, mayst thyself allow

To any one. In Flanders, who can tell
Whether the master press, or men rebel?
Only we know, that which most idiots say,
They must bear blows which come to part the fray.

France in her lunatic giddiness did hate
Ever our men, yea, and our God, of late;
Yet she relies upon our angels well,
Which ne’er return, no more than they which fell.
Sick Ireland is with a strange war possest,
Like to an ague, now raging, now at rest,
Which time will cure; yet it must do her good
If she were purg’d, and her head-vein let blood;
And Midas joys our Spanish journeys give;
We touch all gold, but find no food to live;
And I should be in that hot parching clime

To dust and ashes turned before my time.
To mew me in a ship is to enthral
Me in a prison that were like to fall;
Or in a cloister, save that there men dwell
In a calm heaven, here in a swaying hell.

Long voyages are long consumptions,
And ships are carts for executions;
Yea, they are deaths; is ’t not all one to fly
Into another world, as ’tis to die?
Here let me war; in these arms let me lie:
Here let me parley, batter, bleed, and die.
Thine arms imprison me, and my arms thee;

Thy heart thy ransom is; take mine for me.
Other men war, that they their rest may gain,
But we will rest that we may fight again.
Those wars th' ignorant, these th' experienced love;
There we are always under, here above.
There engines far off breed a just true fear;
Near thrusts, pikes, stabs, yea, bullets, hurt not here.
There lies are wrongs; here safe uprightly lie.

There men kill men; we'll make one by and by.
Thou nothing, I not half so much shall do

In those wars, as they may which from us two

Shall spring. Thousands we see which travel not
To war, but stay, swords, arms, and shot
To make at home; and shall not I do then
More glorious service, staying to make men?

On a Flea on his Mistress’s Bosom

MADAM, that flea which crept between your breasts
I envied, that there he should make his rest;
The little creature’s fortune was so good
That angels feed not on so precious food.
How it did suck, how eager tickle you!
—Madam, shall fleas before me tickle you?—
O! I not hold can; pardon if I killed it;
—Sweet blood, to you I ask this—that which filled it
Ran from my lady’s breast. Come, happy flea,
That died for sucking of that milky sea.
O! now again I could e’en wish thee there,
About her heart, about her anywhere;
I would now (dear flea) that thou shouldst not die,
If thou couldst suck from her her cruelty.

The Portrait

PAINTER, while there thou sit’st drawing the sight
  That her unkind regard hath dyed in grief,
Dip black thy pencil, and forget the white,
  That thou bestow’st on looks that win belief;
And when thy work is done, then let her see
The humble image of her cruelty.

Or if t’ unfold the sense of her disdain
  Exceeds the narrow limits of thine art,
Then blot thy table, and forget thy pain,
  Till thou hast learned the colours of her heart;
And let her then no sight or other show
But that void place where thou hast painted woe.

Tell her that those whom th’ heavens’ injuries
  Have kept at sea in wandering desperation
Sit down at length, and brag of miseries,
  The highest measure of their ostentation.
So hath she lost me till my latest glory
Is her content, and my affliction’s story.

Tell her that tears and sighs shall never cease
  With flowing streams, to sink her in conceit,
Till at the length she pity or release
  The gentle heart that on her eyes did wait,
Pure lights embracing in each other’s scope
The strength of faith and weaknesses of hope.

Thus do I breathe forth my unhappiness,
  And play with rhymes, as if my thoughts were free,
Wherein if I had power but to express
  Her name, the world would with my griefs agree.
But, idle vein! consume thyself in this.
That I have sworn to bury what she is.

Love-Sonnet (I.)

O MADAM, you are of all women true,
Nay virtue's self, that's more, for only you
Are that which we imagine to be she;
You, and but you, make virtue here to be;
You, who by binding make us truly free,
Whose only bondman lives in liberty;
You, in which happy word all things are meant
Excepting wickedness and punishment.
You, that are you, which I love more than I,
In whom my soul can rest, yet I not die;
Nay lives, by being there, for that's his place,
I, but a cabinet that keeps your face
  Or model in my heart, for all that's I
  May in your picture live, in you must die.

Love-Sonnet (II.)

IS there no day, madam, for you? is all
A sullen night? it is not out of choice;
For watchful virtue never did rejoice
In darkness, when it subject was to fall.
But you are led by some unlucky hand
That guides your feet into a path obscure,
Yet looks that you as steadily should stand
As at noonday, and keep your feet as pure.
O, pardon me; should I be guided so
From light, from truth, and from the sight of men,
My guides should too late and quickly know
That darkness was the way to Error's den,
And he should feel, that barr'd me from the light,
The best time to revenge my wrongs were night.

A Warning

VICTORIOUS beauty! though your eyes
  Are able to subdue an host
  And therefore are unlike to boast
The taking of a little prize,
Do not a single heart despise.

It came alone, but yet so arm’d
  With former love I durst have sworn
  That when a privy coat was worn
With characters of beauty charm’d
Thereby it might have ’scaped unharmed.

But neither steel nor stony breast
  Are proof against those looks of thine;
  Nor can a beauty less divine
Of any heart be long possessed
When thou pretend’st an interest.

Thy conquest in regard of me,
  Alas! is small; but in respect
  Of her that did my love protect,
Were it divulged, deserves to be
Recorded for a victory.

And such a one—as some that view
  Her lovely face perhaps may say—
  Though you have stolen my heart away,
If all your servants prove not true.
May steal a heart or two from you.

To the Young Gentlewomen

BEWARE, fair maid, of musky courtier’s oaths;
  Take heed what gifts and favours you receive;
Let not the fading gloss of silken clothes
  Dazzle thy virtues, or thy fame bereave.
For loose but once the hold thou hast of grace,
Who will respect thy favour or thy face?

Each greedy hand doth catch to spoil the flower,
  Where none regards the stalk it grew upon;
Each creature loves the fruit still to devour,
  And let the tree to fall or grow alone.
But this advice, fair creature, take from me;
Let none take fruit unless he take the tree.

Believe not oaths nor much protesting men,
  Credit no vows, nor no bewailing songs;
Let courtiers swear, forswear, and swear again,
  Their hearts do live ten regions from their tongues;
And when with oaths they make the heart to tremble
Believe them least, for then they most dissemble.

Beware, lest Caesar do corrupt thy mind,
  And foul ambition sell thy modesty;
Say tho’ a king thou ever courteous find,
  He cannot pardon thy impurity;
Begin with king, to subject you will fall,
From lord to lackey, and at last to all.

Believe your Glass

BELIEVE your glass, and it will tell you, dear,
    Your eyes enshrine
    A brighter shine
Than fair Apollo; look if there appear
    The milky sky,
    The crimson dye
Mixed in your cheeks; and then bid Phoebus set;
More glory than he owes appears. But yet

… Be not deceived with false alteration:
* * * * *
    As Cynthia's globe,
    A snow-white robe,
Is soonest spotted; a carnation dye
Fades and discolours, opened but to eye.

Make use of youth and beauty while they flourish,
    Time never sleeps;
    Though it but creeps
It still gets forward. Do not vainly nourish
    Them to self-use:
    It is abuse;
The richest grounds lying waste turn bogs and rot,
And so being useless were as good were not.

Walk in a meadow by a river-side,
    Upon whose banks
    Grow milk-white ranks
Of full-blown lilies in their height of pride,
    Which downward bend,
    And nothing tend
Save their own beauties in their glassy stream:
Look to yourself; compare yourself with them—

In show, in beauty: mark what follows then;
   Summer must end,
   The sun must bend
Its long absented beams to others; when
   Their Spring being crossed
   By winter’s frost,
And snipped by bitter storms ’gainst which nought boots,
They bend their proud tops lower than their roots.

Then none regard them, but with heedless feet
   In dust each treads
   Their declin’d heads.
So when youth’s wasted, Age and you shall meet;
   Then I alone
   Shall sadly moan
That interview; others it will not move;
So light regard we what we little love.

Fortune never Fails

WHAT if I come to my mistress' bed,
The candles all eclipsed from shining?
Shall I then attempt for her maiden-head,
Or show myself a coward by declining?
Oh no,
Fie, do not so;
For thus much I know by divining,
Blind is Love,
The dark it doth approve
To prey on pleasures panting;
What needs light
For Cupid in the night,
If jealous eyes be wanting?

Fortune never fails, if she bids take place,
To second all the fair proceedings;
Love and she, though blind, yet each other embrace
To favour all their servants' meetings.
Venture, I say,
To sport and play,
If in place all be fitting;
Though she say "Fie,"
Yet doth she not deny,
For "Fie" is but a word of trial.
Jealousy doth sleep;
Then do not weep
At force of a fair denial.

Glorious is my love, worth triumphs in her face;
Then too-too bold were I to venture.
Who loves, deserves to live in a princess' grace;
Why stand you then afraid to enter?
Lights are all out,
Then make no doubt,

A woer boldly may take a choosing.
  Beauty is a bait
  For a princely mate.
Fie, why stand you then a musing?
  You'll repent too late,
  If she do you hate
For love's delights refusing.

To Mrs. Boulstred

SHALL I go force an elegy? abuse
My wit, and break the hymen of my Muse
For one poor hour's love? deserve it such
Which serves not me to do on her as much?
Or, if it could, I would that fortune shun—
Who would be rich, to be so soon undone?
The beggar's best, his wealth he doth not know,
And but to show it him increaseth woe.
But we two may enjoy an hour; when never
It returns, who would have a loss for ever?
Nor can so short a love, if true, but bring
A half-hour's fear with thought of the losing.
Before it all hours were hope, and all are,
That shall come after it, years of despair.
This joy brings this doubt, whether it were more
To have enjoyed it or to have died before.
'Tis a lost Paradise, a fall from grace,
Which I think Adam felt more than his race;
Nor need those angels any other hell;
It is enough for them from heaven they fell.
Beside, conquest in love is all in all,
That, when I list, she under me may fall;
And for this turn, both for delight and view,
I'll have a Succuba as good as you.
But when these toys are past, and hot blood ends,
The best enjoying is, we still are friends.
Love can but be friendship's outside; their two
Beauties differ as minds and bodies do.
Thus I this great good still would be to take,
Unless one hour another happy make,
Or that I might forget it instantly,
Or in that blest estate that I might die.
But why do I thus travail in the skill
Of despised poetry, and perchance spill

My fortune, or undo myself in sport
By having but that dangerous name in court?
I'll leave, and since I do your poet prove,
Keep you my lines as secret as my love.

To a Painted Lady

NOT kiss! By Jove I will, and make impression!
As long as Cupid dares to hold his session
Within my flesh and blood, our kisses shall
Out-minute time, and without number fall.
Do I not know these balls of white and red
That on thy cheeks so amorously are spread,
Thy snowy neck, those veins upon thy brow,
Which with their azure wrinkles sweetly bow,
Are artificial and no more thine own,
Than chains which on S. George's day are shown
Are proper to the wearers; yet for this
I idol thee, and beg a luscious kiss.
The fucus and ceruse which on thy face
Thy cunning hand lays on to add new grace
[Deceive me with such pleasing fraud, that I
Find in thy art, what can in Nature lie.]

Much like a painter that upon some wall,
On which the cadent sunbeams use to fall,
Paints with such gilded art a butterfly,
That silly maids with slow-moved fingers try
To catch at it, and blush at their mistake,
Yet of this painted fly more reckoning make.
Such is our state, since what we look upon
Is nought but colour and proportion.
Take we a face as full of fraud and lies
As gypsies in their cunning'st flatteries,
That is more false and more sophisticate
Than are saints' relics, or a man of state;
Yet this being glossed by the sleight of art
Gains admiration, winning many a heart.
[But case there be a difference in the mould,
Yet may thy Venus be more choice, and hold

A dearer treasure. Often times we see
Rich Candian wines in wooden bowls to be;]

The odoriferous civet doth not lie
Within the precious musk-cat's ear or eye,
But in a baser place; for prudent Nature,
In drawing use of various forms and feature,
Gives unto them the shop of her large treasure,
To fair parts comeliness, to baser pleasure.
The fairest flowers, which in the Spring do grow,
Are not so much for use as for the show;
As lilies, hyacinths, and the gorgeous birth
Of all pied flowers which diaper the earth,
Please more with their discolour'd purple train
Than wholesome pot herbs which for use remain.
Shall I a gaudy-speckled serpent kiss
For that the colours which he wears be his?
A perfumed cordevant who will not wear
Because the scent is borrow'd otherwhere?
The robes and vestments which do grace us all
Are not our own, but adventitial.
Time rifles Nature's beauty, but sly Art
Repairs by cunning this decaying part;
Fills here a wrinkle and there pearls a vein,
And with a nimble hand runs o'er again
The breaches dented in by th' arm of Time,
Making deformity to be no crime.
As, when great men be gripp'd by sickness' hand,
Industrious physic pregnantly doth stand
To patch up old diseases, and doth strive
To keep their tottering carcases alive.
Beauty's a candle-light, which every puff
Blows out, and leaves naught but a stinking snuff
To fill our nostrils with. This boldly think;
The clearest candle makes the foulest stink;
As your pure food and finest nourishment
Gets the most hot and most strong excrement.

Why hang we then on things so apt to vary,
So fleeting, brittle, and so temporary,
That agues, coughs, the toothache, or catarrh
(Slight houses of diseases) spoil and mar?
But when old age their beauties hath in chase,
And ploughs up wrinkles in their once smooth face,
Then they become forsaken, and do show
Like stately abbeys ruin'd long ago.
Nature but gives the model or first draft
Of fair perfection, which by Art is taught
To make itself a complete form and birth;
So stands a copy to those shapes on earth.
Jove grant me you a reparable face,
Which, whilst that colours last, can want no grace.
Pygmalion's painted image I could love,
So it were warm, and soft, and could but move.

Love’s Power

SHALL Love, that gave Latona’s heir the foil,
(Proud of his archery and Python’s spoil,)
And so enthrall’d him to a nymph’s disdain
As, when his hopes were dead, he, full of pain,
Made him above all trees the laurel grace,
An emblem of Love’s glory, his disgrace;
Shall he, I say, be term’d a foot-boy now
Which made all powers in heaven and earth to bow?
Or is’t a fancy which themselves do frame,
And therefore dare baptize by any name?
A flaming straw! which one spark kindles bright,
And first hard breath out of itself doth fright;
Whose father was a smile, and death a frown,
Soon proud of little and for less cast down?
’Tis so! and this a lackey term you may,
For it runs oft and makes but shortest stay.
But thou, O Love! free from Time’s eating rust,
That set’st a limit unto boundless lust,
Making desire grow infinitely strong,
And yet to one chaste subject still belong;
Bridling self-love, that flatters us in ease,
Quick’ning our wits to strive that they may please;
Fixing the wand’ring thoughts of straying youth,
The firmest bond of Faith, the knot of Truth;
Thou that didst never lodge in worthless heart,
Thou art a master wheresoe’er thou art.
Thou makest food loathsome, sleep to be unrest,
Lost labour easeful, scornful looks a feast;
And when thou wilt, thy joys as far excel
All else as, when thou punishest, thy Hell.
O make that rebel feel thy matchless power,
Thou that madest Jove a bull, a swan, a shower.
Give him a love as tyrannous as fair,
That his desire go yokèd with despair.

Live in her eyes, but in her frozen heart
Let no thaw come that may have sense of smart.
Let her a constant silence never break,
Till he do wish repulse to hear her speak;
And last, such sense of error may him have
As he may never dare for mercy crave.
Then none will more capitulate with thee,
But of their hearts will yield the empire free.

Love and Reason

BASE Love, the stain of youth, the scorn of age,
The folly of a man, a woman’s rage;
The canker of a froward will thou art,
The business of an idle empty heart;
The rack of jealousy and sad Mistrust,
The smooth and justified excuse of lust;
The thief which wastes the taper of our life;
The quiet name of restless jars and strife;
The fly which dost corrupt and quite distaste
All happiness if thou therein be cast;
The greatest and the most conceal’d impostor
That ever vain credulity did foster;
A mountebank extolling trifles small,
A juggler playing loose, not fast with all;
An alchemist, whose promises are gold,
Payment but dross, and hope at highest sold.
This, this is Love, and worse than I can say.
When he a master is, and bears the sway,
He guides like Phaeton, burns and destroys,
Parches and stifles what would else be joys.
But when clear Reason, sitting in the throne,
Governs his beams—which otherwise are none
But darts and mischiefs—oh, then, sunlike, he
Doth actuate, produce, ripen and free
From grossness, those good seeds which in us lie
Till then as in a grave, and there would die.
All high perfections in a perfect lover
His warmth does cherish, and his light discover.
He gives an even temper of delight
Without a minute’s loss; nor fears affright
Nor interrupt the joys such love doth bring,
Nor no enjoying can dry up the spring.
Unto another he lends out our pleasure,
That—with the use—it may come home a treasure.

Pure link of bodies where no lust controls,
The fastness and security of souls!
Sweetest path of life, virtue in full sail,
Tree-budding hope whose fruit doth never fail!
To this dear love I do no rebel stand,
Though not employ'd, yet ready at command.
Wherefore, O Reason high, thou who art king
Of the world's king, and dost in order bring
The wild affections, which so often swerve
From the just rule, and rebel passions serve;
Thou without whose light love's fire is but smoke,
Which puts out eyes and mind's true sense doth choke;
Restore this lover to himself again,
Send him a lively feeling of his pain,
Give him a healthy and discerning taste
Of food and rest, that he may rest at last,
By strength of thee, from his strange strong disease,
Wherein the danger is that it doth please.
Grant this, O Reason, at his deep'st request
Who never loved to see your power suppress'd.
And now to you, Sir Love, your love I crave;
Of you no mastery I desire to have.
But that we may, like honest friends, agree,
Let us to Reason fellow-servants be.

To a Lady of a Dark Complexion

IF shadows be the picture’s excellence
And make it seem more lively to the sense;
If stars in the bright day are lost from sight
And seem most glorious in the mask of Night;
Why should you think, rare creature, that you lack
Perfection, ’cause your eyes and hair are black,
Or that your heavenly beauty, which exceeds
The new sprung lilies in their maidenheads,
The damask colour of your cheeks and lips,
Should suffer by their darkness and eclipse?
Rich diamonds shine brightest being set
And compassed within a field of jet;
Nor were it fit that Nature should have made
So bright a sun to shine without some shade.
It seems that Nature, when she first did fancy
Your rare composure, studied necromancy;
That when to you this gift she did impart
She usèd altogether the black art,
By which infusèd powers from magic book
You do command, like spirits, with a look.
She drew those magic circles in your eyes,
And made your hair the chains with which she ties
Rebelling hearts. Those blue veins, which appear
Winding meanders about either sphere,
Mysterious figures are; and when you list,
Your voice commandeth as the exorcist.
O, if in magic you have power so far,
Vouchsafe to make me your familiar.
Nor hath dame Nature her black art reveal’d
To outward parts alone, some lie conceal’d.
For as by heads of springs men often know
The nature of the streams which run below,
So your black hair and eyes do give direction
To think the rest to be of like complexion;

That rest where all rest lies that blesseth man,
That Indian mine, that strait of Magellan,
That world-dividing gulf, where he who ventures
With swelling sails and ravish’d senses, enters
To a new world of bliss. Pardon, I pray,
If my rude Muse presumeth to display
Secrets unknown, or hath her bounds o’er pass’d
In praising sweetness which I ne’er did taste.
Starved men do know there’s meat, and blind men may,
Though hid from light, presume there is a day.
The rover in the mark his arrow strikes
Sometimes as well as he that shoots at pricks;
And if that I might aim my shaft aright,
The black mark I would hit and not the white.

Borrowing

ONE calls me friend, yet urges me to pay
A debt I borrow’d, not upon a day,
But upon terms of love; am I his friend?
I may then owe as freely as he lend.

Supping Hours

THOU in the field walk’st out thy supping hours,
  And yet thou say’st thou hast supp’d like a king;
Like Nebuchadnezzar perchance, with grass and flowers,
  A salad worse than Spanish dieting.

The Smith

SMUG the smith for ale and spice
Sold all his tools, but kept his vice.

The Lady and her Viol

WHY dost thou, dear, affect thy viol so,
And let thy love forlorn with anguish go?
Thou’lt kindly set him on thy lap, embrace
And almost kiss, while I must void the place.
Thou’lt string him truly, tune him sweetly, when
Thou’lt wrest me out of tune and crack me then.
Thou’lt stop his frets, but set no date to mine.
Thou’lt give whate’er he wants, but let me pine.
Thou know’st him hollow-hearted, yet wilt hear
Him thoroughout with an attentive ear;
And sing him such a pleasing lullaby,
Would charm hell’s churlish porter’s watchful eye,
Keeping true time with him as true may be,
But find no time to keep thee true to me.
Dear, as the instrument would I were thine,
That thou mightst play on me, or thou wert mine.

A Paradox

WHOSO terms Love a fire, may like a poet
Feign what he will, for certain cannot show it;
For fire ne’er burns but when the fuel’s near,
But Love doth at most distance most appear;
Yet out of fire water did never go;
But tears from Love abundantly do flow;
Fire still mounts upward, but Love oft descendeth;
Fire leaves the midst, Love to the centre tendeth;
Fire drys and hardens, Love doth mollify;
Fire doth consume, but Love doth fructify.

The powerful Queen of Love (fair Venus) came,
Descended from the sea, not from the flame;
Whence passions ebb and flow, and from the brain
Run to the heart, like streams, and back again.
Yea Love oft fills men’s breasts with melting snow,
Drowning their love-sick minds in floods of woe.
What, is Love water, then? it may be so;
But he saith truest that saith he doth not know.

Sun, Begone

WHEREFORE peep’st thou, envious Day?
We can kiss without thee;
Lovers hate that golden ray
Which thou bear’st about thee.

Go, and give them light that sorrow,
Or the sailor flying:
Our embraces need no morrow,
Nor our kisses eyeing.

We shall curse thy envious eye
For thy soon betraying;
Or condemn thee for a spy,
If thou find’st us playing.

Get thee gone, and lend thy flashes
Where there’s need of lending:
Our affections are not ashes,
Nor our pleasures ending.

Were we cold or wither’d here,
We could stay thee by us;
Or but one another’s sphere,
Then thou shouldst not fly us.

We are young, thou spoilst our pleasure;
Go to sea and slumber;
Darkness only lends us leisure
Our stolen joys to number.

If She Deride

GREAT and good if she deride me,
Let me walk, I’ll not despair;
Ere to-morrow I’ll provide me
One as great, less proud, more fair.
    They that seek love to constrain
    Have their labour for their pain.

They that strongly can importune,
And will never yield nor tire,
Gain the pay in spite of Fortune;
But such gain I’ll not desire.
    Where the prize is shame or sin,
    Winners lose, and losers win.

Look upon the faithful lover;
Grief stands painted in his face;
Groans and sighs and tears discover
That they are his only grace.
    He must weep as children do,
    That will in the fashion woo.

I, who fly these idle fancies
Which my dearest rest betray,
Warn’d by other’s harmful chances,
Use my freedom as I may.
    When all the world says what it can,
    ’Tis but—O! unconstant man!

Love and Wit

TRUE love finds wit, but he whose wit doth move
Him to love, confesseth he doth not love;
And from his wit passions and true desire
Are forced as hard as from the flint is fire.
My love's all fire, whose flames my soul doth nurse,
Whose smokes are sighs, whose every spark's a verse.
Doth measure win women? Then I know why
Most of our ladies with the Scots do lie.
A Scot is measured in each syllable, terse
And smooth as a verse, and, like that smooth verse,
Is shallow, and wants matter cut in bands.

And they are rugged. Her state better stands,
Whom dancing measures tempted, not the Scot;
In brief, they're out of measure, lost, so got.

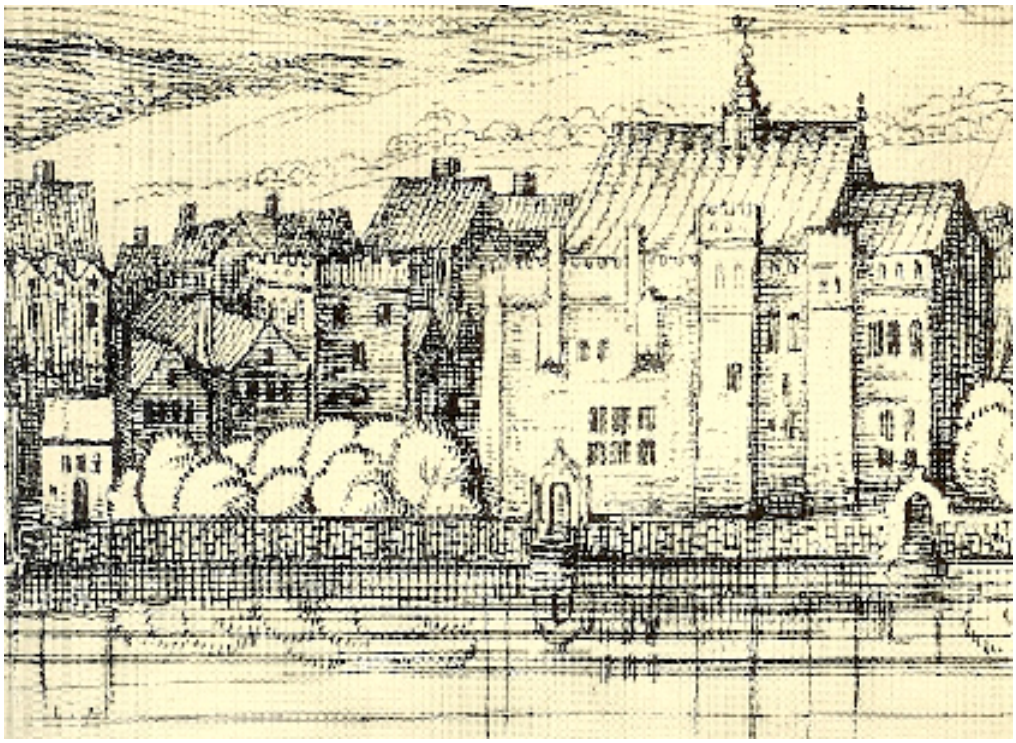
Green-sickness wenches (not needs must, but) may
Look pale, breathe short; at court none so long stay.
Good wit never despair'd there, or "Ah me!" said,
For never wench at court was ravished.
And she but cheats on heaven whom so you win,
Thinking to share the sport, but not the sin.

Dr. Donne’s Farewell to the World

FAREWELL, you gilded follies, pleasing troubles!
Farewell, you honour’d rags, you crystal bubbles!
Fame’s but a hollow echo; gold pure clay;
Honour is but the darling of one day;
Beauty, the eyes’ idol, but a damask skin;
State but a golden prison to keep in
And torture freeborn minds; embroider’d trains
But goodly pageants, proudly-swelling veins;
Fame, riches, honour, state, trains, beauties, birth,
Are but the fading blessings of the earth.
I would be great, but see the sun doth still
Level his beams against the rising hill;
I would be rich, but see men too unkind
Dip in the bowels of the richest minds;
I would be fair, but see the champion proud,
The world’s fair eye, off setting in a cloud;
I would be wise, but that the fox I see
Suspected guilty when the ass is free;
I would be poor, but see the humble grass
Is trampled on by each unworthy ass.
Rich hated, wise suspected, scorn’d if poor;
Great fear’d, fair tempted, and high envied more.
Would the world now adopt me for his heir;
Would Beauty’s Queen entitle me the fair;
Fame speak me Honour’s minion; could I vie
The bliss of angels; with a speaking eye
Command bare heads, bow’d knees, strike Justice dumb
As well as blind and lame; and give a tongue
To stones by epitaphs; be called Master
In the loose lines of every poetaster.
Could I be more than any man that lives,
Rich, wise, great, fair, all in superlatives;
I count one minute of my holy leisure
Beyond too much of all this empty pleasure.

Welcome, pure thoughts! welcome, ye careless groans!
These are my guests, this is that courtage tones.
Ye winged people of the skies shall sing
Mine anthems; be my cellar, gentle spring.
Here dwells no hopeless loves, no palsy fears,
No short joys purchased with eternal tears;
Here will I sit, and sigh my hot youth's folly,
And learn to affect a holy melancholy;
And if contentment be a stranger, then
I'll never look for 't but in Heaven again.
And when I die I'll turn my cave
Even from a chamber to a silent grave;
The falling spring upon the rock shall wear
Mine epitaph, and cause a briny tear
From him who asks who in this tomb doth lie.
The doleful Echo answers: It is I.

The Poems



York House, Strand, London — at the age of 25, Donne was appointed chief secretary to the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, Sir Thomas Egerton, and was established at Egerton's home, York House, in the influential social centre in England. It seemed that Donne was destined for a promising diplomatic career; however, events took a downward turn when he met Egerton's daughter…

The Italianate York Water Gate — all that now remains of York House

Donne's employer, Thomas Egerton, 1st Viscount Brackley (1540-1617)

LIST OF POEMS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

THE FLEA.
THE GOOD-MORROW.
GO AND CATCH A FALLING STAR.
WOMAN'S CONSTANCY.
THE UNDERTAKING.
THE SUN RISING.
THE INDIFFERENT.
LOVE'S USURY.
THE CANONIZATION.
THE TRIPLE FOOL.
LOVERS' INFINITENESS.
SWEETEST LOVE, I DO NOT GO
THE LEGACY.
A FEVER.
AIR AND ANGELS.
BREAK OF DAY.
THE ANNIVERSARY.
TWICKENHAM GARDEN.
VALEDICTION TO HIS BOOK.
COMMUNITY.
LOVE'S GROWTH.
LOVE'S EXCHANGE.
CONFINED LOVE.
THE DREAM.
A VALEDICTION OF WEEPING.
LOVE'S ALCHEMY.
THE CURSE.
THE MESSAGE.
A NOCTURNAL UPON ST. LUCY'S DAY, BEING THE SHORTEST DAY.

WITCHCRAFT BY A PICTURE.
THE BAIT.
THE APPARITION.
THE BROKEN HEART.
A VALEDICTION FORBIDDING MOURNING.
THE ECSTACY.
LOVE’S DEITY.
LOVE’S DIET.
THE WILL.
THE FUNERAL.
THE BLOSSOM.
THE PRIMROSE
THE RELIC.
THE DAMP.
THE DISSOLUTION.
A JET RING SENT.
NEGATIVE LOVE.
THE PROHIBITION.
THE EXPIRATION.
THE COMPUTATION.
THE PARADOX.
SOUL’S JOY, NOW I AM GONE.
FAREWELL TO LOVE.
A LECTURE UPON THE SHADOW.
A DIALOGUE BETWEEN SIR HENRY WOTTON AND MR. DONNE.
THE TOKEN.
SELF-LOVE.
JEALOUSY.
THE ANAGRAM.
CHANGE.
THE PERFUME.
HIS PICTURE.
O, LET ME NOT SERVE SO, AS THOSE MEN SERVE
NATURE’S LAY IDIOT, I TAUGHT THEE TO LOVE
THE COMPARISON.
THE AUTUMNAL.

THE DREAM.
THE BRACELET.
COME FATES; I FEAR YOU NOT!
HIS PARTING FROM HER.
JULIA.
A TALE OF A CITIZEN AND HIS WIFE.
THE EXPOSTULATION.
ON HIS MISTRESS.
VARIETY
LOVES PROGRESS
TO HIS MISTRESS GOING TO BED.
LOVE’S WAR
TO THE EARL OF DONCASTER WITH SIX HOLY SONNETS.
LA CORONA.
ANNUNCIATION.
NATIVITY.
TEMPLE.
CRUCIFYING.
RESURRECTION.
ASCENSION.
TO THE LADY MAGDALEN HERBERT, OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN.
THOU HAST MADE ME, AND SHALL THY WORK DECAY?
AS DUE BY MANY TITLES I RESIGN
O! MIGHT THOSE SIGHS AND TEARS RETURN AGAIN
O, MY BLACK SOUL, NOW THOU ART SUMMONED
I AM A LITTLE WORLD MADE CUNNINGLY
THIS IS MY PLAY’S LAST SCENE; HERE HEAVENS APPOINT
AT THE ROUND EARTH’S IMAGINED CORNERS BLOW
IF FAITHFUL SOULS BE ALIKE GLORIFIED
IF POISONOUS MINERALS, AND IF THAT TREE
DEATH, BE NOT PROUD, THOUGH SOME HAVE CALLED THEE
SPIT IN MY FACE, YOU JEWS, AND PIERCE MY SIDE
WHY ARE WE BY ALL CREATURES WAITED ON?
WHAT IF THIS PRESENT WERE THE WORLD’S LAST NIGHT?
BATTER MY HEART, THREE-PERSON’D GOD; FOR YOU
WILT THOU LOVE GOD AS HE THEE?

FATHER, PART OF HIS DOUBLE INTEREST
SINCE SHE WHOM I LOVED HATH PAID HER LAST DEBT
SHOW ME, DEAR CHRIST, THY SPOUSE SO BRIGHT AND CLEAR
OH, TO VEX ME, CONTRARIES MEET IN ONE
THE CROSS.
RESURRECTION, IMPERFECT.
THE ANNUNCIATION AND PASSION.
GOOD-FRIDAY, 1613, RIDING WESTWARD.
A LITANY.
UPON THE TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS BY SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, AND THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE, HIS SISTER.
ODE: VENGEANCE WILL SIT ABOVE OUR FAULTS
TO MR. TILMAN AFTER HE HAD TAKEN ORDERS.
A HYMN TO CHRIST, AT THE AUTHOR'S LAST GOING INTO GERMANY.
THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMY, FOR THE MOST PART ACCORDING TO TREMELLIUS.
HYMN TO GOD, MY GOD, IN MY SICKNESS.
A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER.
TO GEORGE HERBERT, SENT HIM WITH ONE OF MY SEALS OF THE ANCHOR AND CHRIST.
A SHEAF OF SNAKES USED HERETOFORE TO BE MY SEAL, THE CREST OF OUR POOR FAMILY.
TRANSLATED OUT OF GAZÆUS, "VOTA AMICO FACTA," FOL. 160.
AWAY THOU FONDLING MOTLEY HUMORIST
SIR; THOUGH (I THANKE GOD FOR IT) I DO HATE
KIND PITY CHOKES MY SPLEEN; BRAVE SCORN FORBIDS
WELL; I MAY NOW RECEIVE, AND DIE; MY SINN
THOU SHALT NOT LAUGH IN THIS LEAFE, MUSE, NOR THEY
MEN WRITE THAT LOVE AND REASON DISAGREE
TO SIR NICHOLAS SMYTH
UPON MR. THOMAS CORYATS CRUDITIES
IN EUNDEM MACARONICUM
EPITHALAMION ON THE LADY ELIZABETH AND COUNT PALATINE BEING MARRIED ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.
ECLOGUE AT THE MARRIAGE OF THE EARL OF SOMERSET.

EPITHALAMION MADE AT LINCOLN’S INN.
THE STORM
THE CALM
TO MR B. B.
TO MR C. B.
TO MR S. B.
TO MR E. G.
TO MR I. L.
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TO SIR HENRY GOODYER
A LETTER WRITTEN BY SIR H. G. AND J. D. ALTERNIS VICIBUS
TO SIR HENRY WOTTON
TO SIR HENRY WOTTON
TO SIR HENRY WOTTON, AT HIS GOING AMBASSADOR TO VENICE
H. W. IN HIBERNIA BELLIGERANTI
TO SIR EDWARD HERBERT, AT JULIERS
TO MRS M. H. (MAD PAPER STAY)
TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD AT NEW YEAR'S TIDE
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TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD
TO THE LADY BEDFORD
EPITAPH ON HIMSELF

A LETTER TO THE LADY CAREY, AND MISTRESS ESSEX RICH, FROM AMIENS
TO THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON
TO THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON
TO THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY
ON HIMSELF.
MY FORTUNE AND MY WILL THIS CUSTOM BREAK
MAN IS THE WORLD, AND DEATH THE OCEAN
ELEGY UPON THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF THE INCOMPARABLE PRINCE HENRY
OBSEQUIES OF THE LORD HARRINGTON, BROTHER TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD
ELEGY ON MISTRESS BOULSTRED (I)
ELEGY ON MISTRESS BOULSTRED (II)
DEATH
ELEGY ON THE LORD CHANCELLOR
A HYMN TO THE SAINTS, AND TO MARQUIS HAMILTON
HERO AND LEANDER.
PYRAMUS AND THISBE.
NIOBE.
A BURNT SHIP.
FALL OF A WALL.
A LAME BEGGAR.
A SELF-ACCUSER.
A LICENTIOUS PERSON.
ANTIQUARY.
DISINHERITED.
PHRYNE.
AN OBSCURE WRITER.
KLOCKIUS
RADERUS.
MERCURIUS GALLO-BELGICUS.
RALPHIUS
THE PROGRESS OF THE SOUL
A FUNERAL ELEGY.
THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY.

THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY
DE LIBRO CUM MUTUARETUR IMPRESSO
AMICISSIMO, ET MERITISSIMO BEN. JOHNSON
TO MR. GEORGE HERBERT
A SHEAF OF SNAKES
TRANSLATED OUT OF GAZÆUS, VOTA AMICO FACTA. FOL.160

LIST OF POEMS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

A-D E-H I-L M-O P-S T-V W-Z

A BURNT SHIP.
A DIALOGUE BETWEEN SIR HENRY WOTTON AND MR. DONNE.
A FEVER.
A FUNERAL ELEGY.
A HYMN TO CHRIST, AT THE AUTHOR'S LAST GOING INTO GERMANY.
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A LITANY.
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A SHEAF OF SNAKES
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A VALEDICTION FORBIDDING MOURNING.
A VALEDICTION OF WEEPING.
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DISINHERITED.
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PRINCE HENRY
EPITAPH ON HIMSELF
EPITHALAMION MADE AT LINCOLN’S INN.
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PALATINE BEING MARRIED ON ST. VALENTINE’S DAY.
FALL OF A WALL.
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FATHER, PART OF HIS DOUBLE INTEREST
GO AND CATCH A FALLING STAR.
GOOD-FRIDAY, 1613, RIDING WESTWARD.
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LOVERS’ INFINITENESS.
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TO SIR HENRY WOTTON
TO SIR HENRY WOTTON
TO SIR HENRY WOTTON, AT HIS GOING AMBASSADOR TO VENICE
TO SIR NICHOLAS SMYTH
TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD
TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD
TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD
TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD
TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD
TO THE COUNTESS OF BEDFORD AT NEW YEAR'S TIDE
TO THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON
TO THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON
TO THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY
TO THE EARL OF DONCASTER WITH SIX HOLY SONNETS.
TO THE LADY BEDFORD
TO THE LADY MAGDALEN HERBERT, OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN.
TRANSLATED OUT OF GAZÆUS, “VOTA AMICO FACTA,” FOL. 160.
TRANSLATED OUT OF GAZÆUS, VOTA AMICO FACTA. FOL.160
TWICKENHAM GARDEN.
UPON MR. THOMAS CORYATS CRUDITIES
UPON THE TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS BY SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, AND THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE, HIS SISTER.

VALEDICTION TO HIS BOOK.
VARIETY
WELL; I MAY NOW RECEIVE, AND DIE; MY SINN
WHAT IF THIS PRESENT WERE THE WORLD’S LAST NIGHT?
WHY ARE WE BY ALL CREATURES WAITED ON?
WILT THOU LOVE GOD AS HE THEE?
WITCHCRAFT BY A PICTURE.
WOMAN’S CONSTANCY.

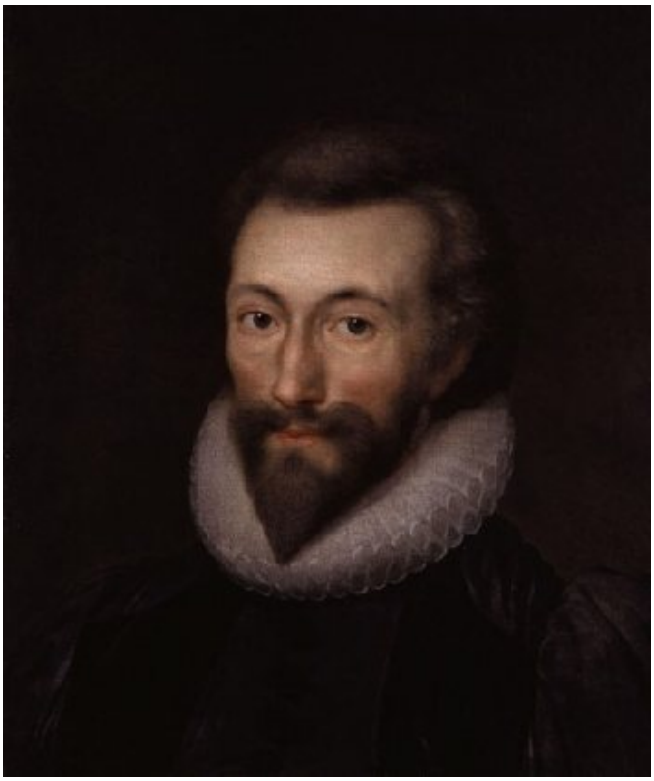
The Prose

Donne's house in Pyrford, Surrey, where he lived after his marriage to Egerton's daughter Anne More in 1601. His father-in-law was furious with Donne and actually sent him to the Fleet Prison for a time. It was not until 1609 when they were fully reconciled. In the meantime, Donne lived as an exile of sorts, scraping a meagre living as a lawyer

JOHN DONNE
POET AND
DEAN OF ST PAUL'S
LIVED HERE

BIATHANATOS

Written in 1608 and published after Donne’s death, this non-fiction treatise is a heterodox defence of suicide. In the work, Donne uses prominent Biblical examples including Jesus, Samson, Saul, and Judas Iscariot to support his argument.



John Donne by Issac Oliver, c. 1627

CONTENTS

BIATHANATOS
THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY
THE PREFACE
THE FIRST PART: OF LAW AND NATURE
THE SECOND PART: OF THE LAW OF REASON
THE THIRD PART: OF THE LAW OF GOD
CONCLUSION

BIATHANATOS

A Declaration of the Paradox or Thesis that Self-homicide is not so Naturally a Sin that it May Never Be Otherwise; in which the nature and the extent of all the laws which seem to be violated by this act are diligently surveyed.

Written by John Donne, who afterwards was ordained in the Church of England and died Dean of Saint Paul's, London....

"I do not profess everything to be true. But I will roil the waters for the readers' profit."

Published by Authority.

London. Printed for John Dawson.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY

To the right honorable Lord Philip Herbert: My lord, although I have not exactly obeyed your commands, yet I hope I have exceeded them by presenting to your honor this treatise, which is so much the better for being none of my own and which perchance may deserve to live for facilitating the issues of death.

It was written long since by my father and by him forbidden both the press and the fire; neither would I have subjected it now to the public view. But I could find no certain way to defend it from the one save by committing it to the other. For since the beginning of this war, my study having been often searched and all my books (almost my brains) by their continual alarums sequestered for the use of the Committee, two dangers appeared more eminently to hover over this work, being then a manuscript—the danger of being utterly lost and the danger of being utterly found. These dangers are fathered by some of those wild atheists who, as if they came into the world by conquest, own all other men's wits and are resolved to be learned, in spite of their stars, which would fairly have inclined them to a more modest and honest course of life.

Your lordship's protection will defend this innocent writing from these two monsters, men who cannot write and men who cannot read, and I am very confident that all those who can will think it may deserve this favor from your lordship. For although this book appears under the form of a paradox, still I desire your lordship to look upon this doctrine as a firm and established truth.

"To dare death gives life."

Your lordship's most humble servant,

John Donne

From my house in Covent Garden 28.

THE PREFACE

Declaring the Reasons, the Purpose, the Way, and the End of the Author

Beza, a man as eminent and illustrious in the full glory and noon of learning as others were in the dawning and morning (when even the least sparkle was notorious) confesses of himself that but for the anguish of a running sore on his head, he would have drowned himself from the Miller's Bridge in Paris, if his uncle just then had not by chance come that way. I often have such a sickly inclination. Whether it is because I had my first breeding and conversation with men of a suppressed and afflicted religion, accustomed to despising death and hungry for an imagined martyrdom; or because the common enemy finds that door in me worst locked against him; or because there is a perplexity and flexibility in the doctrine itself; or because my conscience always assures me that no rebellious grudging at God's gifts or other sinful concurrence accompanies these thoughts in me; or because a brave scorn or a faint cowardliness beget it whenever any affliction assails me—whatever the reason, I think I have the keys of my prison in my own hand, and no remedy presents itself so quickly to my heart as my own sword. Often, meditation on this act has won me to a charitable interpretation of their action who die thus and has provoked me a little to watch and attack the reasons of those who pronounce such peremptory judgments upon them.

A devout and godly man has guided us well and rectified our uncharitableness in such cases by this remembrance, "You know this man's fall, but you do not know his wrestling, which perhaps was such that his fall itself is almost justified and accepted by God." For to this end, says Bosquier, "God has appointed us temptations that we might have some excuses for our sins when he calls us to account." It is an uncharitable misinterpreter who unthriftily demolishes his own house and does not repair another; he loses without any gain or profit to anybody. Tertullian, comparing and making equal one who provokes another and one who will be provoked by another, says, "There is no difference, but that the provoker offended first, and that is nothing, because in evil there is no respect of order or priority." So we may quickly become as evil as any offender, if we offend by severely reproving his act. For John Climacus in his *Ladder of*

Paradise places these two steps very near to one another when he says, "Although in the world it would be possible for you to escape all defiling by actual sin, yet by your judging and condemning those who are defiled you are defiled." Basil notes that you are defiled because "In comparing others' sins you cannot avoid excusing your own." Especially this is done if your zeal is too fervent in reprehending others. For as in most other happenings, so in this one also, sin has the nature of poison, in that "It enters the easiest and works the fastest upon choleric constitutions." It is a good counsel of the Pharisees, "Do not judge a neighbor before you stand in his place."

"Feel and wrestle with such temptations as he has done, and your zeal will be tamer."

"Therefore," says the apostle, "it was fitting for Christ to be like us, so that he might be merciful" (Hebr. 2:10).

After a Christian affirmation of an innocent purpose, after submitting all that is said not only to every Christian church but to every Christian man, and after an entreaty that the reader will follow this advice of Judah ben Tabbai, "May those who quarrel be in your sight both bad and guilty," and that the reader will trust neither me nor the adverse party but the reasons—if then there is any scandal in this enterprise of mine, it is taken, not given. I know that malicious, prejudiced men and lazy affecters of ignorance will use the same calumnies and protests toward me, for the voice and sound of the snake and goose is all one. Nevertheless, because I thought that, as in the pool of Bethsaida there was no healing till the water was troubled (John 5:2-9), so the best way to find the truth in this matter is to debate and examine it. "We must dispute about truth as well as for truth," wrote Athenagoras. Thus I did not for fear of misinterpretation abstain from this undertaking. Our stomachs now are not so tender and queasy, after feeding so long upon solid divinity, nor are we so suspicious and afraid, having been so long enlightened in God's path, that we should think any truth strange to us or relapse into that childish age in which a council in France forbade Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and punished with excommunication either the copying, reading, or possessing of that book.

Contemplative and bookish men must of necessity be more quarrelsome than others, because neither do they contend about matters of fact nor can they determine their controversies by any certain witnesses or judges. But as long as they move towards peace (that is, truth), which way they take does not matter. The tutelary angels resisted one another in Persia, but none

resisted God's revealed purpose (Dan. 10). Jerome and Gregory seem to be of the opinion that Solomon is damned; Ambrose and Augustine, that he is saved—all Fathers, all zealous of God's glory. At the same time when the Roman Church canonized Becket, the school of Paris disputed whether he could be saved; both Catholic judges, and of reverend authority. After so many ages of devoutly and religiously celebrating the memory of Saint Jerome, Casaubon has spoken so dangerously that Campion says he pronounces him to be as deep in hell as the devil. But in all such intricacies, where both opinions seem to conduce equally to the honor of God, his justice being as much advanced in the one as is his mercy in the other, it seems reasonable to me that it tips the scales, if on either side there appears charity toward the poor soul departed. The church in her hymns and antiphons often salutes Christ's nails and cross with epithets of sweetness and thanks, but it always calls the spear that pierced him when he was dead the horrible sword.

Such piety, I affirm again, urges me in this discourse. Whatever infirmity my reasons may have, still I have comfort in Tresmegistus's axiom, "He who is pious is the best philosophizer." Therefore, without any disguising or careful and libelous concealing, I present and expose it to all who have candor and neutrality, in order to escape the just reproof of Jerome, "A new kind of malice and intemperance is to communicate what you wish to hide." When Ladislas took the occasion of the Great Schism to corrupt the nobility of Rome and hoped thereby to possess the town, they added to their seven governors, whom they called wise men, three more, whom they called good men, and confided in them; so do I wish and, as much as I can, bring it about that to those many learned and subtle men who have traveled over this point, some charitable and compassionate men might be added.

Yosippon observes that readers are of four sorts: sponges that attract everything without distinguishing, hour-glasses that pour out as fast as they receive, bags that retain only the dregs of the spices and let the wine escape, and sieves that retain only the best. If I find some of the last sort, I do not doubt they may be enlightened. As the eyes of Eve were opened by the taste of the apple (although it is said she had already seen the beauty of the tree), so the digesting of this, though it may not present fair objects, may bring them to see the nakedness and deformity of their own reasons, founded upon a rigorous suspicion, and win them over to the temper that Chrysostom commends: "He who suspects benignly would fain be deceived

and be overcome, and he is piously glad when he finds to be false what he uncharitably suspected." May it have as much vigor (as one observes of another author) as the sun in March; may it stir and dissolve humors—though not expel them, for that must be a work of a stronger power.

Not every branch that is excerpted from other authors and engrafted here is written for the reader to believe, but for the sake of illustration and comparison. Because I undertook the declaration of a proposition that was controverted by many—and therefore I was drawn to cite many authorities—I was willing to go all the way with company and to take light from others, as well in the journey as at the journey's end. If in multiplicity of unnecessary citations there appears vanity, or ostentation, or digression, my honesty must make my excuse and compensation. I acknowledge, as Pliny does, "That to choose to be taken in a theft rather than to give every man his due" is to be low of mind and miserable of nature. I did it rather because scholastic and skillful men use this way of instructing, and I took into account that I was to deal with such, because I presume that natural men are of themselves at least enough inclinable to this doctrine.

This is my way, and my end is to remove scandal. Certainly God often punishes a sinner more severely because others have taken occasion of sinning from his deed. By the same token, if we corrected in ourselves this readiness to be scandalized, how much easier and lighter might we make the punishment of many transgressors? For God in his judgments has almost made us his assistants and counselors as to how far he will punish, and our interpretation of another's sin often gives the measure to God's justice or mercy.

Since "disorderly long hair, which was pride and wantonness in Absalom and squalor and horridness in Nebuchadnezzar, was virtue and strength in Solomon and sanctification in Samuel," if these severe men will not allow to neutral things the best construction they are capable of nor pardon my inclination to do so, surely they will pardon this opinion, that their severity proceeds from self-guiltiness, and will give me leave to apply the saying of Ennodius, "It is the nature of stiff wickedness to think of others what they themselves deserve, and all the comfort that the guilty have is to find nobody innocent."

THE FIRST PART: OF LAW AND NATURE

Distinction I

1.—As lawyers used to call impossible what is so difficult that by the rules of law it can be accomplished only by the indulgence of the prince and the exercise of his prerogative, so divines are accustomed to call sin what mostly is so and naturally occasions and accompanies sin. Of such condition is self-homicide. Everybody has so sucked, digested, and incorporated it as a sin into the body of his faith and religion that now they forbid any opposition. Thus all discourse on this point turns on the degrees of this sin and how far it exceeds all others. So nobody now brings the metal to the test or the touch, but only to the balance. Whatever to our appetite is good or bad was first to our understanding true or false; therefore, if we might proceed orderly, our first disquisition should be employed upon the first source and origin—which is, whether this opinion is true or false. But, finding ourselves under the inequity and burden of this custom and prescription, we must yield to necessity and first inversely examine why this act should be so resolutely condemned and why there should be this precipitousness in our judgment to pronounce self-homicide to be above all other sins unpardonable. Then, having removed what was nearest to us and having delivered ourselves from the tyranny of this prejudice, our judgment may be brought nearer to a straightness and our charity awakened and made tender to apprehend that this act may be free not only from those enormous degrees but from *all* degrees of sin.

2.—Those who pronounce this sin to be necessarily damnable are of one of these three persuasions. Either they misstate that this act always proceeds from desperation [i e., despair of God’s mercy], and so they load it with all the abundant denunciations available from scripture, Fathers, and histories. Or they entertain the dangerous opinion that there is in this life an inability to repent and an impossibility of returning to God, and that this is apparent to us; otherwise, the act could not justify our uncharitable censure. Or else they build upon the foundation that this act, being presumed to be sin, and all sin presumed to be unpardonable without repentance, this is therefore unpardonable because the sin itself precludes all ordinary ways of repenting it.

3.—To those of the first group, if I might be as vainly subtle as they are uncharitably severe, I answer that not all desperation is sinful. For in the devil it is not sin, nor does he suffer demerit from it, because he is not commanded to hope. In a man who undertook an austere and disciplinary taming of his body by fasts or corrections it would not be sinful to despair that God would take from him the desire of the flesh. In a priest employed to convert infidels it would not be sinful to despair that God would give him the power of miracles. If, therefore, to quench and extinguish this desire of the flesh a man should kill himself, the effect and fruit of this desperation would be evil; yet the root itself is not necessarily so. No detesting or exhorting against this sin of desperation, when it *is* a sin, can be too earnest. But since it may exist without infidelity, it cannot be a greater sin than that is.

Although Aquinas calls it truly sin, he says he does so because it occasions many sins. If, as others affirm, it is punishment for sin, then it is involuntary, which is hardly consistent with the nature of sin. Certainly, many devout men have justly imputed to it the cause and effect of sin; yet, as in the Penitential Canons greater penance is inflicted upon one who kills his wife than upon one who kills his mother, and the reason added is not that the fault is greater but that otherwise more would commit it, so is the sin of desperation so earnestly exaggerated because, as it springs from sloth and cowardliness, our nature is more slippery and inclinable to such a descent than to presumptions, which without a doubt does more to wound and violate the majesty of God than desperation does. However, so that none may justly say that all who kill themselves have done it out of a despair of God's mercy (which is the only sinful despair), we shall in a more proper place, when we come to consider the examples exhibited in scriptures and other stories, find many who in that act have been so far from despair that they have esteemed it a great degree of God's mercy to have been admitted to such a glorifying of his name and have proceeded therein as religiously as in a sacrifice. As Bosquier says elegantly of Job, "He appears in splendid proverbs," and of him we may properly say what Moses said when they punished one another for their idolatries, "Consecrate your hands to the Lord" (Exod. 32:29).

I come to consider their words who are of the second opinion and who affirm an inability to repent in this life. (A strong authorizer if not an author of this opinion is Calvin, who says that actual unrepentance is not the sin

intimated in Matthew 12:30-31; rather, we must hold that whoever falls into such a willful resistance of the Holy Ghost never rises again.) Because these hard and misinterpretable words fall from them when they are perplexed and enmeshed with that heavy question of sin against the Holy Ghost, and because I presume to speak proportionally and analogically to their other doctrine, I rather incline to make for them this construction: that they place this inability to repent only in the knowledge of God—or that I do not understand them rather than either believe them literally or believe that they have clearly expressed their own meanings. For I do not see why we should be more loath to allow that God has made some persons unable to sin than that he has made them unable to repent. Even if they had their way and this were granted to them, I cannot see that therefore such an inability to repent must necessarily be concluded to have been in a person by reason of self-homicide, and it gives great-

4. The third sort is the tamest of all the three, and it gives the greatest hope of being overcome and corrected. Although they pronounce severely upon the act, it is for the single reason that the act precludes all entrance into repentance. I wonder why they refuse to apply to their opinions in this matter the milder rules of the casuists, who in doubtful cases always teach an inclination to the safer side. While it is safer to think a thing to be sin than not, that rule serves for your own information and as a as a bridle to you, not for another's condemnation. They used to interpret that rule of taking the safer side so that in things necessary (necessary to an end, as repentance is necessary to salvation) we must follow any probable opinion, even if another is more probable, and so that opinion is to be followed directly which is favorable to the soul. They exemplify this point as follows. Although all the leading scholastics hold that baptizing a child, not yet fully born, on the hand or foot is ineffectual, still they all advise in that case to baptize and to believe it to be of good effect. The example of the good thief on the cross (Luke 23:43) informs us that repentance works immediately, and from that story Calvin gathers that such pain at the moment of death is naturally apt to beget repentance.

The church is so indulgent and liberal to all her children that at the point of death she will bestow her treasure of baptism upon one who has been insane from his birth, by the same reason as upon a child—indeed, upon one recently fallen into insanity, although he appears to be in mortal sin, if only he has attrition, which is only a fear of hell and not a taste of God's

glory. Such attrition shall be presumed to be in him, if nothing appears evidently to the contrary. If the church is content to extend and interpret this point of death to every danger by sea or travel; if she will interpret any mortal sin in a man provoked by sudden passion and proceeding from indeliberation to be no worse and of no greater malignity than the act of a child; if, being able to succor one before he is dead, she will deliver him from excommunication after he is dead; if she is content that both the penitent and confessor are only diligent, not most diligent; if, rather than be frustrated in her desire to dispense her treasure, she grants that insane and possessed men shall be bound until they may receive extreme unction; if, lastly, she absolves some whether they wish it or not—in light of all this, why should we abhor our mother's example and as brethren be more severe than the parent? Not to pray for those who die without faith is a precept so obvious to every religion that even Muhammad has forbidden it. But to presume an inability to repent because you were not nearby to hear it is a usurpation.

True repentance, says Clement of Alexandria, is "To do no more and to speak no more those things whereof you repent; it is not to be always sinning and always asking pardon." Of such a repentance as this our case is capable enough. Of one who died before he had repented the good Paulinus charitably interprets his haste, "That he chose rather to go to God a debtor than as free," and so to die in his debt rather than to carry his discharge from it. Since in matters of fact the delinquent is so much favored that a layman who acquits him is sooner to be believed than a clergyman who accuses him—although in other cases there is much disproportion between the value of these two testimonies—so, if any will of necessity proceed to judgment in our case, those reasons that are most benign and (as I said) favorable to the soul ought to have the best acceptance and entertainment.

5. Of all those definitions of sin that the first collector of sentences, Peter the Lombard, has presented out of ancient learning, the authors of summas as well as the casuists insist most on the one that he gets from Saint Augustine. As usual, where that Father serves their purposes they look no further. This definition is that sin is a word, deed, or desire against the eternal law of God. They stick to this definition (if it is one) because it best supports their argument, because it is the easiest conveyance, carriage, and vent for their conceptions and for their applying rules of divinity to particular cases. Thus they have made all our actions perplexed and litigious

in the inner court of conscience, which is their tribunal. By this torture they have brought men's consciences to the same reasons of complaint that Pliny attributes to Rome until Trajan's time, that the city founded on the laws was being overturned by the laws. For as informers vexed them with continual denunciations upon penal laws, so does this act of sinning entangle wretched consciences in manifold and desperate anxieties.

This use of the definition cannot be thought to apply only to sin, since it limits sin to the eternal law of God. (This term, although not in Peter the Lombard, Sayer and all the rest retain.) This eternal law of God is the ground of the governance of God, no other than his eternal decree for the government of the whole world; that is, providence. Certainly a man may without sin both speak and act against providence, since it is not always revealed, just as I may resist a disease from which God has decreed that I shall die. Even though he seems to reveal his will, we may resist it with prayers against it, because it is often conditioned and accompanied by limitations and exceptions. Even though God dealt plainly with Nathan, saying, "The child shall surely die" (I Sam. 12:14), David resisted God's decree by prayer and penance.

We must therefore seek another definition of sin. I think it is not as well put in those words of Aquinas, "Every failure to perform an obligation has the character of sin," as in his other definition, "Sin is an act departing from the ordained end, against the rule of nature or of reason, or of eternal law." Here eternal law, being stated as a member and part of the definition, cannot admit of the vast and large interpretation that it could not escape in the description of Saint Augustine; in this text it must necessarily be intended as the divine law of scripture. Through this definition, therefore, we will grace this act of self-homicide and see whether it offends any of those three sorts of law.

6.—Of all these three laws—of nature, of reason, and of God—every precept that is permanent and always binds is so composed, elemented, and complexioned that to distinguish and separate them is an alchemistic work. Either it only seems to be done or it is done by the torture and vexation of scholastic nit-pickings [original: "school-limbicks," a racking of the brain over abstract ideas], which are abstruse and violent distinctions. The part of God's law that always binds already bound before it was written, and so it is simply the rule of rectified reason, and that is the law of nature. Therefore

Isidore of Seville (as it is related in the canons), dividing all law into divine and human, adds, “Divine consists of nature, human of custom.”

Although these three laws are almost entirely one, yet because one thing may be commanded in various ways and by various authorities—as the common law, a statute, and a decree of an arbitrary court may bind me to do the same thing—it is necessary that we weigh the obligation of every one of these laws that is in the definition.

But first I shall only soften and prepare their crude, undigested opinions and prejudice, which may be contracted from the frequent iteration and specious but sophisticated inculcatings of law—of nature, reason, and God—by this antidote: many things that are of natural, human, and divine law may be broken. To conceal a secret delivered to you is of this sort. The honor due to parents is so strictly one of these laws that none of the Second Table (Exod. 20:12-17) is more so, yet in a just war a parricide is not guilty. Indeed, according to a law of Venice—though Bodin says better the town were sunk than that this ever should be an example or precedent—a son must redeem himself from banishment by killing his father who is also banished. We read of another state (and laws of civil commonwealths may not lightly be pronounced to be against nature) where, when fathers came to be of an unprofitable and useless age, the sons must beat them to death with clubs. We read of still another where all persons above seventy years were dispatched.

7.—This term, the law of nature, is so variously and inconsistently defined that I confess I must read it a hundred times before I understand it once or can conclude that it signifies what the author at that time means. Yet I never found it in any sense that might justify their vociferations upon sins against nature. For the transgressing of the law of nature in any act seems to me not to increase the heinousness of that act, as though nature were more obligatory than divine law. Only in one respect does natural law aggravate a transgression; that is, in such a sin we are inexcusable by any pretense of ignorance, since we can discern it by the light of nature. Many things that we call sin (and therefore evil) have been done by the commandment of God; for example, by Abraham (Gen. 22:2) and by the Israelites in their departing from Egypt (Exod. 12:35). Thus the evil is neither in the nature of the thing nor in the nature of the whole harmony of the world. Therefore, evil inheres in no law of nature but in violating or omitting a commandment.

All is obedience or disobedience. Wherefore our countryman Sayer confesses that self-homicide is not as intrinsically evil as it is to lie. This point is also evident from Cajetan, who affirms that to save my life I may not accuse myself from the rack. Although Cajetan extends the matter no further than that I may not belie myself, Soto refuses Cajetan's reasons with so much force as to forbid any self-accusation, even though it is true. Thus, according to Cajetan, I may depart from life much more easily than from truth or fame. But we find that many holy men have been very negligent of their fame. Not only Augustine, Anselm, and Jerome betrayed themselves by unurged confessions; Saint Ambrose even procured certain prostitute women to come into his chamber so that he might be defamed and the people would thereby abstain from making him their bishop.

Intrinsic and natural evil can hardly be found! For God, who can command a murder, cannot command an evil or a sin. Since the whole frame and government of the world is his, he may use it as he will. For example, although he can do a miracle, he can do nothing against nature, because "That is the nature of everything which he works in it," says Augustine. From this and from that other rule of Aquinas's, "Whatever is wrought by a superior agent upon a patient who is naturally subject to that agent is natural," we may safely infer that nothing we call sin is so against nature that it may not sometimes be agreeable to nature.

On the other side, nature is often taken so widely and so extensively that all sin is very truly said to be against nature—even before it comes to be sin. Saint Augustine says, "Every vice, so far as it is a vice, is against nature." Vice is only habit that, being extended into act, is then sin. Yes, the parent of all sin, which is hereditary, original sin, which Aquinas calls "a languor and faintness in our nature and an indisposition, proceeding from the dissolution of the harmony of original justice," is said by him to be in us "as if natural" and is, as he says in another place, so natural "that although it is propagated with our nature in generation, it is not caused by the principles of nature." Thus, if God should now miraculously frame a man, as he did the first woman, from another's flesh and bone (and not by generation) into that creature, all the infirmities of our flesh would be derived, but not original sin. Original sin is transmitted by nature only, and, since all actual sin issues from it, all sin is natural.

8.—To approach nearer, let us leave the consideration of the law of nature in this sense of providence and God's decree for his government of

the great world, and reduce it simply to the law of nature in the lesser world of ourselves. There is in us a double law of nature, sensitive and rational, and the first naturally leads and conduces to the other. Because by the languor and faintness of our nature we lazily rest there and for the most part go no further in our journeys, out of this ordinary disposition Aquinas pronounces that the inclination of our sensitive nature is against the law of reason. This is what the apostle calls the law of the flesh and what he opposes to the law of the spirit (Rom. 7:23).

Although it is possible to sin and to transgress against this sensitive nature, which naturally and lawfully is inclined toward a desirable good, by denying it lawful refreshings and promptings, still I think this is not the law of nature that those who abhor self-homicide complain is violated by that act. They might as well accuse all discipline, all austerity, and all love of martyrdom, which are just as contrary to the law of sensitive nature.

9.—Therefore by the law of nature, if they will mean anything and speak to be understood, they must intend the law of rational nature, which is the light that God has given of his eternal law. It is usually called rectified reason. Now since this law of nature exists only in man and directs him toward piety, religion, and sociableness—so far as it reaches to the preservation of the species and of individuals, there are lively prints of it in beasts—most authors confound it and make it the same with the law of nations. So says Azorius. Sylvius writes that “the law of nature as it concerns only reason is the law of nations.” Therefore, whatever is the law of nations, that is, practiced and accepted, most especially in civilized nations, is also the law of nature, which Artemidorus exemplifies in these two, to serve God and to be overcome by women.

How then shall we accuse idolatry or immolation of being sins against nature? (I will not speak of the first, which like a deluge overflowed the world, and only Canaan was a little ark swimming in it, delivered from utter drowning—but not from storms, leaks, and dangerous weather- beatings.) Immolation of men was so ordinary that “almost every nation, although not barbarous, had received it.” The Druids of France made their divinations from sacrifices of men, and in their wars they foretold the future in the same way. In our times it appears, according to the Spanish reports, that in Hispaniola alone they sacrificed yearly 20,000 children.

10.—However, since it is received from Aquinas that “The nature of every thing is the form by which it is continued, and to act against it is to

act against nature," and since also this form in man is reason, and to act against reason is to sin against nature, what sin can be exempt from the charge that it is a sin against nature, since every sin is against reason? In this sense Lucidus takes the law of nature when he says, "God has written in our hearts such a law of nature as by that we are saved in the coming of Christ." Thus, every act that does not agree exactly with our religion will be a sin against nature. This will appear evidently from Jeremiah's words, where God promises as a future blessing that he will write his laws in their hearts, which is the Christian law (Jer. 31:33).

The Christian law and the law of nature (for that is the law written in hearts) must be the same. Sin therefore against nature is not so enormous but that what Navarrus says may stand true, "Many laws both natural and divine bind only to what is pardonable." (I am not disputing at this time whether or not it is always against reason, for reason and virtue differ exactly as do a closed box of drugs and a plaster or medicine made from them and applied to a particular use and necessity; in the box are not only aromatic medicinals but also many poisons made wholesome by the nature of the disease and the art of the one who administers them.) By the same token, self-homicide is no more against the law of nature than any other sin, not in any of the interpretations that we touched upon above.

This is as much as I determined for this first distinction.

Distinction II

1. There is a lower and narrower interpretation of this law of nature (which could not well be discerned except in light of the foregoing discussion), against which law this sin and very few others seem to be directly bent and opposed. Azorius says, "There are sins peculiarly against nature that are against the natural practice of men," which he exemplifies in unnatural lusts and in self-homicide. Of the former example Aquinas says, "There are some kinds of lusts that are sins against nature both as they are generally vices and as they are against the natural order of the act of generation." In the scriptures the sin of misusing sex is called against nature by Saint Paul (Rom. 1:26-27) and once in the Vulgate edition in the Old Testament (Judges 19:24). But, as I intimated once before, this sin against nature is so much abhorred not because its being against nature makes it so abominable but because the knowledge thereof is so domestic, so near, so

inward to us that our conscience cannot slumber in it nor dissemble it, as it does in most sins.

Take the example of the Levite in the book of Judges (19:lff.). Let's assume that those wicked men did seek him for that abominable use—although Josephus says it was only for his wife, and when he himself relates to the people the story of his injury in the next chapter, he complains only that they went about to kill him to enjoy his wife and of no other kind of injury. Although the host who had harbored him tried to dissuade the men, saying, "Only let nothing be done that is against nature," will any man say that the offer he made to extinguish their furious lust, to expose them to his own daughter, a virgin, and the wife of his guest (which Josephus increases by calling her a Levite and his kinswoman) was a lesser sin than to have given way to their violence, or less against nature, because what they sought was against natural practice?

Is not every voluntary pollution in the genus of sin as much against the law of nature as this was, since it strays and departs from the way and defeats the end of that faculty in us, which is generation? In no interpretation does the violating of the law of nature aggravate the sin. Neither does the scripture call any sin other than disorderly lust by that name. Saint Paul once appeals to the law of nature, when arguing about the covering of the heads of men or women at public prayer. He says, "Judge for yourselves," and, "Does not nature teach you that if a man has long hair it is a shame?" (I Cor. 11:13-14). Not that this was against that law of nature to which all men are bound, for it was not always so. In most places shavings, cuttings, and pullings of hair are reprehended for delicacy and effeminacy by the satirists and epigrammatists of those times. Until foreign corruption poisoned them, the Romans were always gloriously called unshorn. But, says Calvin, "Because it was at that time received as a custom throughout all Greece to wear short hair, Saint Paul calls it natural."

So Vegetius says, "From November to March the seas are shut up and unmanageable by the law of nature, which now are tame and manageable enough, and this is also by the law of nature." And the custom that Saint Paul called natural in Greece was not long natural there. For the bishops of Rome, when they made their canons regulating priest's shavings, did it because they wanted their priests to differ from the priests of the Greek Church. So Saint Paul's mentioning the law of nature does not argue from the weight and heinousness of the fault, as our adversaries use it, but he

uses it as the nearest, most familiar, and easiest way to lead them to a knowledge of decency and to a departing from scandalous singularity in those public meetings.

2. Although Azorius (as I said) and many others make self-homicide an example of sin in particular against the law of nature, it is only for the reason that self-preservation is of natural law. But that natural law is so general that it applies to beasts more than to us, because they cannot compare degrees of obligation and distinctions of duties and offices, as we can. We know from Aquinas that "some things are natural to the species and other things to the particular person" and that the latter may correct the former. Thus, when Cicero consulted the oracle at Delphi, he had this answer, "Follow your own nature." Certainly the text, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Gen. 2:18) is meant there, because if he were alone God's purpose of multiplying mankind would have been frustrated. Though it would be bad for the conservation of our species in general, it may be very fitting for some particular man to abstain from all such consorting in marriage or with men and to retire into solitude. Some may need Chrysostom's counsel, "Depart from the highway and transplant yourself in some enclosed ground, for it is hard for a tree that stands by the wayside to keep its fruit till it is ripe."

Our safest assurance that we will not be misled by the ambiguity of the term, natural law, and by the perplexed variety of its use in authors will be this from Aquinas: "All the precepts of natural law result in these: flee evil; seek good." That is to say, act according to reason.

As these precepts are not dispensable by any authority, so they cannot be abolished or obscured, for our hearts will always not only retain but also acknowledge this law. From these precepts are deduced by consequence others that are not always necessary, such as, "Return a deposit." Although this seems to follow from the first rule (act according to reason), it is not always just. Aquinas says that the lower you go towards particulars the more you depart from the necessity of being bound to it. Ennenckel illustrates it more clearly, "It is natural and binds all always to know that there is a God. From this it is deduced by necessary consequence that God (if he is) must be worshiped and then by likely consequence that he must be worshiped in this or that manner." So, a little corruptly and adulterately, every sect will call their discipline natural law and enjoin a necessary obedience to it.

While our *substance* of nature (the foundations and principles and first grounds of natural law) may not be changed, yet the *function* of nature (the exercise and application of those principles) and deductions therefrom may and must be changed. A similar danger lies in deducing consequences from the natural law of self-preservation, which does not bind so rigorously, urgently and unlimitedly as to preclude that by the law of nature itself living things may, indeed must, neglect themselves for others. Of this the pelican [believed to have fed its young its own blood] is an instance or emblem. Saint Ambrose, philosophizing divinely in a contemplation of bees, after he has afforded them many other praises, says, “When they find themselves guilty of having broken any of their king’s laws, they injure themselves, condemned to punishment, that they may die from their own wound.” This magnanimity and justice he compares with that of the subjects of the kings of Persia, who in similar cases are their own executioners. Like this natural instinct in beasts, so rectified reason, belonging only in us, instructs us often to prefer public and necessary persons by exposing ourselves to inevitable destruction.

No law is so primary and simple that it does not preconceive a reason upon which it was founded, and hardly any reason is too constant for circumstances to alter it. In that case, a private man is emperor over himself; so a devout man, Dorotheus, interprets those words, “Let us create man in our own image, that is, to be judge in his own cause.” He whose conscience, well-tempered and dispassionate, assures him that the reason of self-preservation ceases for him may also presume that the law ceases too, and may do what otherwise would be against that law.

If it is true that “It belongs to the bishop of Rome to declare, interpret, limit, and distinguish the law of God,” as their authorities teach, which is to declare when the reason of the law ceases, what this author and the canons affirm may be just as true, that he may dispense with that law; he does no more than any man might do with respect to himself, if he could judge as infallibly. Let it be true that no man may at any time do anything against the law of nature; still, Aquinas says, “Dispensation does not work so that I may use it to disobey a law, but so that this law becomes to me no law in the case where the reason of it ceases.” So may any man be bishop and magistrate over himself and dispense with his conscience, where it can appear that the reason—that is, the soul and form—of the law has ceased.

As in oaths and vows, so in the law, the necessity of dispensations proceeds from the fact that a thing which, when universally considered in itself, is profitable and honest, by reason of some particular event becomes either dishonest or hurtful. Neither of these events can fall within the reach or under the commandment of any law. In these exempt and privileged cases, “The privilege is not against universal law but against the universality of law,” according to Ennenckel. It only relieves a person, it does not wound or render infirm a law, any more than I diminish the virtue of light or the dignity of the sun if, to escape its scorching, I allow myself the relief of the shade.

Neither the watchfulness of parliaments nor the descents and indulgences of princes who have consented to laws derogatory to themselves has been able to prejudice the prince’s “notwithstandings,” because prerogative is incomprehensible. It overflows and transcends all law. Just as those canons that boldly and, according to some schoolmen, blasphemously say, “The pope is not allowed,” neither diminish the fulness of his power nor impeach the motions proper to him (as they call them) or his “notwithstanding divine law,” because they are understood always to whisper some just reservation —without just cause, or in matters as they stand—so, whatever law is cast upon the conscience or liberty of man, of which the reason is mutable, is naturally conditioned in that it binds only so long as the reason lives.

Moreover, self-preservation, which we confess to be the foundation of general natural law, is nothing other than a natural affection and desire for good, whether real or apparent. Certainly the motive for martyrdom, although the body perishes, is self-preservation, because thereby out of our election to salvation our best part is advanced. Heaven, which we thus gain, is certainly good, while this life is only probably and possibly good. What Athenagoras says holds well here, “Earthly things and heavenly things so differ as verisimilitude and truth.” And Pico’s is the best description of felicity that I have found, “It is the return of any given thing to its origin.”

Now this law of self-preservation is accomplished in attaining what conduces to our ends and is good to us, for liberty, which is a faculty of doing what I would, is as much of the law of nature as preservation is. Still, if for reasons seeming good to me, such as to preserve my life when I am justly taken prisoner if I will become a slave, I may do it without violating the law of nature. If I propose to myself in self-homicide a greater good, even though I mistake it, I do not see how I transgress the general law of

nature, which is an affection for good, whether real or apparent. If what I effect by death is truly a greater good, how is the other, stricter law of nature, which is rectified reason, violated?

3. Another reason that prevails much with me and keeps self- homicide from being against the law of nature is this: in all ages, in all places, and upon all occasions men of all conditions have wanted it and inclined to do it. As Cardan says, “Metal is a buried plant, and a mole is a buried animal.” So man, as though he were a buried angel, labors to be discharged of his earthly sepulchre, his body. To be sure, it may be said of all other sins that men are prone to them, and despite their frequency they are against nature —that is, rectified reason. Still, if this sin were in particular against the law of nature (as they must hold who make it worse by that circumstance) such that it worked to the destruction of our species in any other way than do intemperate lust, gluttony, or incurring penal laws, and the like, it could not be as general as they are. For, being contrary to our sensitive nature, it lacks the advantage of pleasure or delight to allure us that other sins have.

When I frame for myself a martyrology of all who have perished by their own means for the sake of religion, country, fame, love, ease, fear, and shame, I blush to see how naked all the other virtues are in comparison with fortitude; I blush to see that all the stories do not afford so many examples (either of cunning and subtle stratagems or of forcible and violent actions) for safeguarding life as they do for destroying it.

Petronius Arbiter, who served Nero, a man of pleasure, in the office of master of his pleasures, at the first frown of displeasure went home and cut his veins. To him so present and immediate a step was it from full pleasure to such a death.

How subtly and curiously Atilius Regulus destroyed himself! Being of such integrity that he would never have lied to save his life, he lied to lose it, falsely pleading that the Carthaginians had given him poison, and that within a few days he should die—although he stayed at Rome.

Codrus’s forcing of his own death exceeded even this, because in the disguise of a common soldier he was likely to perish without fame.

Herennius the Sicilian could endure beating out his own brains against a post. As though he owed thanks to the brain that had given him this device of killing himself, he would not leave off beating until he could see it and salute it.

Comas, who had been a captain of thieves, came to the torture of trial. Scorning all foreign and accessory aids to dying, he made his own breath the instrument of his death by holding it.

Hannibal, who would be beholden to none for life or death, lest he should be overtaken by extreme necessity died from poison that he always carried in a ring.

So did Demosthenes die from poison he carried in a pen.

When Aristarchus saw that neither his seventy-two years of age nor the corrupt and malignant disease of being a severe critic could wear him out, he starved himself to death.

Homer, who had written a thousand things that nobody else understood, is said to have hanged himself because he did not understand the fisherman's riddle.

Othryades, of the 300 champions appointed to end a quarrel between the Lacedemonians and the Athenians, alone survived; when the lives of all the 300 were then in him, as though it would be a new victory to kill them once again, he killed himself.

Damocles, whom a Greek tyrant would have violated, in order to show that he could suffer any other heat scalded himself to death.

Cato's daughter Porcia, like Catulus, opposed new measures—Quintilian calls them "new causes for dying"—and died by swallowing burning coals.

Poor Terence, because he lost his 108 translated comedies, drowned himself.

And the poet Labienus, because his satirical books were burned by edict, burnt himself too.

Zeno, over whom hardly any is preferred, stumbled and hurt his finger against the ground. He interpreted that as a summons from the earth and hanged himself, being then almost 100 years old. For this act Diogenes Laertius proclaims him to have been "A man who departed this life in great happiness, sound, whole, and without illness."

To cure himself of fever, Porcius Latro killed himself.

Festus, Domitian's minion, did it only to hide the deformity of a ringworm in his face.

Hipponax the poet rhymed Bupalus the painter to death with his iambics.

Licinius Macer bore well enough being called into question for great faults, but he hanged himself when he heard that Cicero would plead

against him, although the Roman condemnations at that time did not inflict such heavy punishments.

Cassius Licinius, to escape Cicero's judgment, by choking himself with a napkin had, as Tacitus calls it, "the reward of hastening his death."

You can hardly imagine any person so happy or miserable, so reposed or so vain, or any occasion either of true loss or shame or perversity, for which there are no examples of it. Yet nobody seems to me to have made harder shift to die than Charondas, who made a new law punishing by death whoever entered the council chamber armed; then he broke that law and soon punished himself by falling upon his sword.

The general desire for such death is abundantly expressed in those swarms of Roman gladiatory champions who, Lucidus reckons, in one month cost Europe 30,000 men. Not only men of great birth and place in the state but also women coveted to be admitted to its exercise and outpouring of life, until express laws forbade it.

From Eleazar's oration, recorded in Josephus, we may see how small persuasions moved men to this act; "He only told them that the philosophers among the Indians did so, and that we and our children were born to die but not born to be slaves."

We may well recall that, in Caesar's time in France, for every one who died naturally there died many by this devout violence. He says there were some, whom he calls devotees and clients (the later laws call them vassals) who, enjoying many benefits and commodities from men of higher rank, when the lord died always celebrated his funeral with their own. Caesar adds that in the memory of man no one was found who ever refused it.

This devotion, I have read somewhere, continues still in all the wives in the kingdom of Bengal in India. There not only such persons do it in testimony of an entire dependency and gratitude, but also the Samanaians, who did not inherit religious rank, priesthood, and wisdom as did the Levites among the Jews and the Gymnosophists among them, but these were admitted to it by election, when notice was taken of their sanctity. They are said to have studied ways how to die, especially when they were in the best state of health. These priests, whose care was to die thus, always summed up and abridged all their precepts into this one, "Let a pious death determine a good life." In such estimation they held this manner of dying.

How pathetically Latinus Pacatus expresses the sweetness of dying when we will! "Others," says he, "after the conquest, making a braver bargain

with destiny, prevented uncertain death by certain death, and the slaves escaped whipping by strangling themselves. For whoever feared that after death there was no hope? Or who would therefore forbear to kill himself whom another might kill? Is another's hand easier than your own? Or is a private death fouler than a public one? Or is it more pain to fall on your sword and to press the wound with your body—and so receive death at once—than to divide the torment, bend the knee, stretch out the neck, perhaps to more than one blow?" Then, wondering why Maximus, who had murdered the emperor Gratian and was now subdued by Theodosius, had not enjoyed the common benefit of killing himself, he (Pacatus) turns upon Gratian and says, "Reverend Gratian, you have chased your executioner and would not allow him leisure for so honest a death, lest he should stain the sacred, imperial robe with such impious blood, or a tyrant's hand should perform your revenge, or you be beholden to him for his own death." With similar passion speaks another panegyric to Constantine, who after a victory took from the conquered their swords, lest anyone come to grief. From this language one may see how natural it was in those times to prefer such dispatch.

In our age, when the Spaniards extended the law that was made only against the cannibals, so that those who would not accept the Christian religion should incur bondage, the Indians in infinite numbers escaped this slavery by killing themselves. They never ceased until the Spaniards by some deceptions made them think they also would kill themselves and follow the Indians with some severity into the next life.

This much seems to me sufficient to defeat the argument that is drawn from self-preservation and to prove that it is not so much in particular a law of nature that it is not often transgressed naturally.

Here we will end this second distinction.

Distinction III

1. After this, when men by civility and mutual use of one another became more thrifty of themselves and sparing of their lives, the solemnity of killing themselves at funerals wore out and vanished, but slowly and by insensible diminutions. "For first as a symbol of it the men wounded themselves and the women scratched and defaced their cheeks and sacrificed by that sprinkling of blood. After that, they made graves for

themselves near their friends' graves and entered into them alive as nuns do when they renounce the world. Then as a symbol of this symbol they only took some earth and wore it upon their heads, and so for the public benefit they were content to forfeit their custom of dying," according to Sylvius.

Then came Christianity. Besides its many advantages over other philosophies, it has made us clearly understand the state of the next life. (Although Moses and his followers understood it, they always disguised it under earthly rewards and punishments, either because human nature from its first fall to its restitution and dignification by Christ was generally incapable of understanding such mysteries, or because it was reserved to our blessed savior to interpret and comment upon his own law, which that great successive trinity of human wisdom, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, saw only glimmeringly and variously. As to matters of this life, Christianity is the most Stoic and severe sect that ever cast bridle upon mankind.) I say, after Christianity had quenched those regards for fame, ease, shame, and such, how quickly and naturally man snatched and embraced a new way of expending his life by martyrdom!

2. There were the famous acts or famous sufferings of the Jews, even to defend their ceremonies. Many thousands of them were slain simply because they would not defend themselves on the sabbath (I Macc. 2:31-38). The customs of that nation were always steeped in sacrifices of blood. Of almost all other nations they were the most devout and earnest, even in the immolation of men. There is the example of our blessed savior, who chose as the way for our redemption to sacrifice his life and shed his blood. While all this was fresh in the minds of the early Christians and governed all their affections, it was not hard for their authorities, even by natural reasons and examples, to invite or to cherish their propensity to martyrdom.

Therefore, when Clement of Alexandria handles this matter, he presents hardly any argument other than natural men are capable of, and such food and fuel as would serve the taste and fervor of one who was not curious beyond nature. For example, he argues thus: that death was not naturally evil; that the heathen endured greater pains for less reward; that a barbarous people immolated every year a principal philosopher to Zamolxis an idol, and those upon whom the lot fell did not mourn that fact; with most earnestness, that martyrdom is within our own power—all of which are arguments better proportioned to nature than to divinity. Clement presumed

that the early Christians were persons inclined or inclinable by nature to this affection.

Tertullian's reasons are somewhat more sublime, yet rather fine and delightful than solid and weighty. For example, he argues thus: that God, knowing that man would sin after baptism, provided him a second solace, the baptism of blood; that the death of the saints, which is said to be precious in God's sight, cannot be understood of the natural death common to all; that, from the beginning in Abel, righteousness was afflicted. These reasons would not have entered the heads of any in whom a natural inclination had not already opened the gates.

Cyprian takes the same path and insists upon applying prophecies of two sorts, that the early Christians should be despised in this world, and that they should be rewarded in the next.

To these were added external honors, annually celebrating their memories and entitling their deaths birthdays, and the early instituting of the office of notaries to regulate their passions—even in Clement of Rome's time; also, the proposing that their embalmed heads be worshiped, which term (although Eunapius spoke it profanely) was not undeserved by the general misuse of such devotion.

After the monopoly of appropriating martyrdom and bestowing its benefits only upon those who held the integrity of the faith and were in unity with the church, of which persuasion Augustine and Jerome and most of the ancients are said to be, came a continual increase in the dignity and merit of it, such as that by virtue of the performance of the act it purged actual sin, as baptism did original sin, even for one without charity and in schism. If it did not merit salvation, it diminished the intenseness of damnation. By these means they incited man's nature to it. The proneness might also have been a little corruptly warmed towards it by always seeing those punished who afflicted them, for Tertullian says, "No city escaped punishment that had shed Christian blood."

After this, they went on to admit more into the martyrs' fellowship and to confer and extend their privileges. By such indulgence are the innocents slain by Herod (Matt. 2:16) counted as martyrs. So is John the Baptist, although he did not die (Matt. 14:1-12, Mark 6:14-29) for a matter of Christian faith. So is he who suffers for any virtue. So is he who dies in his mother's womb if she is a martyr. So is he who, having been mortally wounded for his Christian profession, recovers. So is he who, being not

mortally wounded, dies afterwards of sickness contracted by his own negligence, if that negligence did not amount to mortal sin.

So, not only the sickly and infirm later ages but even the purest times cherished in men this desire of death, even for contrary reasons; notwithstanding by change of circumstances, both reasons had the appearance of good. For as fire is made more intense sometimes by sprinkling water and sometimes by adding fuel, so when their teachers found any coolness or remissness in them and an inclination to flight or compromise with the state, then Cyprian noted such with the ignominy of *Libellatici*—buyers of forged certificates—because they had gotten false papers from the state. He says of them, "The fault of those Christians who made pagan sacrifices is less, not that their conscience is clean." Tertullian equally decries both fleeing and buying such papers when he says, "Persecution must not be redeemed, for running away is a buying of your peace for nothing, and a buying of your peace for money is a running away."

Then we shall find that, even against the plain meaning of the word martyr [i e., a witness], it became the common opinion that death was requisite and necessary to make one a martyr. So in Eusebius the Christians, although afflicted, modestly refused the name of martyrs and professed that they did not deserve it, unless they were killed.

Contrariwise, in other times, the disease of headlong dying at once seemed both to wear down their numbers and to lay some scandal upon the cause that worked such a desire in men who did not understand why they did it; the uninstructed, the uncatechized, yes the unbaptized did only what they saw others do. The charity of the survivors imputed to them a baptism of water, as they hoped, or at least of blood, for that they saw! I say, as a learned writer of our time says, "The church abstains from easy canonizing, so that sanctity should not be devalued"— and sanctity here means sainthood, not holiness. Lest the dignity of martyrdom should be debased by such promiscuous admittance to it, they were often content to allow them the comfort of martyrdom without dying, which was only a returning to the natural sense of the word.

Ignatius in his letters calls himself a martyr. Yes, more than the rest he brought down the value of martyrdom and the costly price, for he says, "As he who honors a prophet in the name of a prophet shall have a prophet's reward (Matt. 10:41), so he shall have a martyr's honor who honors one

who has been bound to Christ." As our most blessed savior was proceeding in his merciful purpose of increasing his kingdom on earth while permitting the heathen princes to continue theirs, the Christian religion was dilated and oppressed. Then its professors, so dejected and worn with confiscations and imprisonments, thought that, as in the passover from Egypt every door was sprinkled with blood (Exod. 12:7), so heaven had no door from this world except by fires, crosses, and bloody persecutions. Presuming heaven to be at the next step, they would often stubbornly or stupidly wink and so make that one step.

God forbid that any should be so malignant as to misinterpret me, as though I either thought the blood of martyrs was not the seed of the church or diminished their dignity. Yet it befits candor to confess that those times were afflicted with a disease of this natural desire for such a death, and that to such may fruitfully be applied those words of the good Paulinus, "The athlete does not win just because he undresses, nor do they swim to the far shore just because they strip off their clothes." Alas! We may sink and drown at the last stroke. To sail to heaven it is not enough to cast away the burdensome superfluities that we have long carried about us, but we must also take in a good freight. It is not lightness but an even-reposed steadfastness that carries us there.

Cyprian was forced to search out an answer to this lamentation, which he then found to be common to men on their death-beds, "We mourn because with all our strength we had vowed ourselves to martyrdom, of which we are deprived, being prevented by natural death." For those who offered themselves to martyrdom before they were called upon he is fain to provide the glorious and satisfying name of professors.

From such an inordinate desire, all too obedient to nature, proceeded the fury of some Christians who, standing by when sentence was pronounced against others, cried out, "We also are Christians." And that inexcusable zeal of Germanicus, who drew the beast to himself and forced it to tear his body! Why did he do this? Eusebius gives us his reason, that he might sooner be delivered out of this wicked and sinful life. These acts Eusebius glorifies with the praise that "They did them with a mind worthy of a philosopher." It seems that the wisest men provoked this act by their examples. At the burning of the temple at Jerusalem, Meirus son of Belgas and Josephus son of Delaeus, although they had access to the Romans, cast themselves into the fire.

How passionately Ignatius solicits the Roman Christians not to interrupt his death. “I fear,” he says, “your charity will hurt me and make me begin my life all over again, unless you strive that it may be sacrificed now. I profess to all churches that I die willingly.” After that, “Let me stroke the wild beasts with soothing words; let me entice and corrupt the beasts to devour me and to be my sepulcher; let me enjoy those beasts whom I wish were much more cruel than they are, and if they will not attack me, I will provoke and attract them by force.” What was Ignatius’s reason for this, being a man necessary to those churches and having allowable excuses for avoiding it? “Because to me it is more useful to die.”

Such intemperance prompted the woman of Edessa, when the Emperor Valens had forbidden the Christians one temple to which particular reasons of devotion attracted them. When the officers asked her, “Why so squalid?” as she headlong dragged her son through the streets, to enrage them with this contumely she replied, “I do it lest, when you have slain all the other Christians, I and my son should come too late to partake of that benefit.”

Such a disorderly heat possessed that old, wretched man who, passed by after the execution of a whole legion of 6,666 by iterated decimation [i e., by repeatedly drawing lots and slaying every tenth soldier] under Maximinian. Although he was told that they died for resisting not only the Roman religion but also the state, for all that he wished that he might have the happiness to be with them, and so he extorted a martyrdom. For that age had grown so hungry and ravenous for it that many were baptized only because they would be burned, and children were taught to vex and provoke executioners so they might be thrown into the fire.

This assuredness that men, fully persuaded that they were doing well, would naturally run to this act made the proconsul in Africa exclaim, “Are there any more Christians who desire to die?” When a whole multitude by general voice disclosed themselves, he bade them, “Go hang and drown yourselves, and ease the magistrate.” This natural disposition afforded Muhammad an argument against the Jews: “If your religion is so good, why do you not die for it?” Our primitive church was so enamored of death and so satisfied with it that, in order to vex and torture them more, the magistrate made laws to take from them the comfort of dying and increased their persecution by stopping it. They gloried in their numbers.

As in other warfares men muster and reckon how many they bring into the field, their confidence of victory was in the multitudes of those who

were lost. In this interest they admitted into the catalogue of martyrs the infants slain by Herod and the 11,000 virgins. When 9,000 soldiers under Hadrian are said to have embraced the Christian religion by apparition of an angel, and when the emperor sent others to execute them, 1,000 of the executioners joined them, and so the whole 10,000 were crucified. Baronius speaks of the 10,000 executed in Armenia, celebrated on the twenty-second day of June—whether or not these are different from the 10,000 under Hadrian I have not investigated. Saint Gregory says, "Let God number our martyrs, for to us they are more in number than the sands." Baronius says that except for the first of January (for which the Roman martyrology records as many as most other days), there is no day that has less than 500 martyrs and almost every one has 900 or 800.

3. The church increased abundantly under all these pressures. For in profane and secular wars the greater the triumphs of a conqueror, the greater also are his armies, because then more and more concur to his splendor and participate in his fortunes. So in this spiritual warfare the greater the triumphant church was, the greater grew the militant church, each assisted by the prayers of the other. Although I still say that very many died out of a natural infirmity of despising this life, a great number had their direct sights on the glory of God and went to it fully awares. When all these treadings down only harrowed our savior's field and prepared and improved it for his harvest, the blood of the martyrs having (as Nicephorus Callistus says) almost strangled the devil, he tried to turn them away from this inclination by his two greatest instruments (when they are his), the magistrates and the learned.

By suggesting to the magistrate that their zeal to die grew only from their faith in the resurrection, the devil procured their bodies to be burnt and their ashes scattered into rivers, to frustrate and defeat that expectation. And he raised up subtle heretics to weaken and darken the virtue and majesty of martyrdom.

Of these the most pestilently cunning was Basileides. Suspecting in advance that he would not easily remove the desire of dying that nature had bred and custom confirmed in them, he tried to remove the desire that had root only in their religion, being of tenderer growth and more removable than natural impressions. He offered not to impugn their exposing themselves to death in all cases, but only said that it was madness to die for Christ, since he, by whose example they did it, was not crucified, but

instead Simon who bore the cross. Another heretic called Elkesai, perceiving that it was too hasty to condemn the act of martyrdom even for Christ, thought only to slacken their desire for it by teaching that in time of persecution, as long as we kept our heart at anchor safe, we were not bound to testify to our religion by any outward act, much less by dying.

This doctrine the Gnostics also taught, because the contrary was rooted in nature, because they accompanied this doctrine with many others foul and odious even to sense, and because they were resisted by Tertullian, a mighty man both in his general abilities and in his particular and professed earnestness to magnify martyrdom. Against these he wrote his *Remedy against a Scorpion's Sting.*

4.—This way the orthodox gave no advantage to heretics, who also let loose the bridle of their own nature and seized every occasion of dying as zealously as the orthodox Christians. Because the latter prescribed against them and were ahead of them in numbers, to redeem time and overtake them they constituted new occasions of martyrdom. Petilianus, against whom Saint Augustine wrote, taught that whoever killed himself as a magistrate, to punish a previously committed sin, was a martyr.

There were those whom Saint Augustine and others called Circumcellians and Circuitores, because (I think, like their master [i e., the devil], they went about to devour) they would entreat, persuade, and coerce others to kill them. Then, frustrated after all those provocations, they would do it themselves and be celebrated for martyrs by their survivors. These were Donatists, of whom Saint Augustine says, "To kill themselves out of respect for martyrdom was daily sport." Other heretics also, whose errors did not concern martyrdom, hastened to it. So the Cataphrygians who, erroneously baptizing the dead, ordaining women, annulling second marriages, and erring in similar points, could soon boast of their number of martyrs—perhaps because they found Tertullian on their side, since wherever he went he was a hot encourager of men to martyrdom.

Eusebius complained that heretics, seeing their arguments refuted, then fled to their number of martyrs, in which they pretended to exceed the others. From their numbers of martyrs the Euphemites called themselves "martyrians." Baronius says, "Amongst the heathen perchance you may here and there find one Empedocles who will burn himself, but among the Donatists, swarms of men."

5.—Thus the authority gained by their zeal to equal the number of true martyrs was so great and began so far to perplex the world that some councils, foreseeing that if both sides did it equally it would all be imputed to human concerns, began to take care to provide against it. One council at Laodicaea exhibits an express canon that no Christian should leave the true martyrs for false ones because they were enemies of God. Another council at Carthage corrects the other heresy of diminishing the reputation of martyrs by directing, “Let nobody who is profane defame the martyrs’ dignity.”

6.—When the true spirit of God drew many, the spirit of contention drew many also, and other natural infirmities even more, to expose themselves easily to death. It may well be thought that the authors of these later ages have somewhat diminished the intenseness of martyrdom and mingled more alloys, or rather more metal, and made it of not so great value in itself as those earnest times did. Later, Saint Thomas Aquinas said, “Though martyrdom is a work of greatest perfection, yet it is not of itself but only as it is wrought by and expresses charity.”

Vazquez reprehends Cordoba for saying that it is any worship of God, for “It is not,” says he, “a sacrifice or work of religion but of fortitude, which is only a moral virtue.” Navarrus now teaches that “It is a mortal sin to provoke another to inflict martyrdom.” It is also taught that a martyr (although martyrdom purges much) is bound to cleanse himself by every one of the degrees of penance, for, says Carbone, “It is not a sacrament but a privileged work.” They seem tender and loath by adding religious incitements to cherish or further that desire of dying to which, by reason of our weakness and this world’s encumbrances, our nature is too prone and inclined.

Only the Jesuits boast of their seeking martyrdom in the new worlds and of their rage until they find it. Scribanius, who has brought them all upon one scene, says that “Alfonso de Castro at his execution in the Molucca was so overjoyed that he forgot his modesty. ‘We snatch martyrdom,’ says he, ‘with a spontaneous rush.’”Further, “One would think it a disease in us, something we do lest the rest of our life should be devoid of merit and lacking in glory.” Again, “We bargain and contract with our profession upon the condition that we squander souls on hostile swords.” Yet again, “We possess no more than such small matters as only serve to cut off our

life.” If this desire of dying is against and not agreeable to the nature of man, apparently it is not against the nature of a Jesuit.

Here we end this discussion, which we intended only for the consideration of this desire of martyrdom that swallowed up all the other inducements which, before Christianity contracted them, tickled and inflamed mankind.

Distinction IV

1. There remains for the fourth and last distinction of this first part only to state the reason by which self-homicide seems to me to escape breaking any law of nature. Both express, literal laws and mute law or custom have authorized it, not only by allowing and conniving in it but also by commissioning it.

It is countenanced not only by many flourishing and well-policed states but also by ideal commonwealths that cunning authors have conceived—in which very enormous faults are unlikely to be allowed. Among the Athenians condemned men were their own executioners by means of poison and among the Romans by means of blood-letting. It is recorded of many places that all sexagenarians were by the laws of wise states thrown from a bridge. Pereira has conjectured that this report was occasioned by a custom in Rome, according to which men of that age were not allowed to vote; since the way to the senate was via a bridge [Latin: *per pontem*], those who by reason of that age were not permitted to come to the senate were called “Depontans.”

However that may be, it is more certain that among the Ceans unprofitable old men poisoned themselves; they were crowned with garlands as men triumphant over human misery. The Ethiopians loved death so well that their greatest malefactors, being condemned to banishment, ordinarily escaped it by killing themselves. The civil law, where it appoints no punishment to the delinquent in this case either in his estate or in his memory, punishes a jailer if his prisoner kills himself— out of a prejudice that if the means is afforded them they will all do so.

Do we not see it to be the custom of all nations now to manacle and disarm condemned men, from a prior assurance that otherwise they would escape death by death? Sir Thomas More, a man of the most tender and delicate conscience that the world has seen since Saint Augustine, one who

was not likely to write anything in jest or mischievously, says that in Utopia the priests and magistrates used to exhort men afflicted with incurable diseases to kill themselves, and they were obeyed as the interpreters of God's will; but they who killed themselves without giving an account of their reasons to the priests and magistrates were cast out unburied. Plato, who is usually cited against this opinion, disputes it in a fashion as severe and peremptory as this: "What shall we say of him who kills his nearest and dearest friend, who deprives himself of life and of the purpose of destiny? —who, not urged by any sentence or heavy misfortune or externe shame, but out of a cowardliness and weakness of a fearful mind, unjustly kills himself? What purgatory and what burial by law belongs to him, God himself knows. But let his friends inquire of the interpreters of the law, and do as they shall direct." You see, nothing is said by him against self-homicide except what is said modestly, limitedly, and perplexedly.

This is all that I shall say of the first member of that definition of sin that I undertook, which is transgressing the law of nature. I claim that I have sufficiently delivered and rescued self-homicide from any such violating of the law as may aggravate the act or make it heinous.

THE SECOND PART: OF THE LAW OF REASON

Distinction I

1.—The part of the definition of sin that we reserved for the second part is that self-homicide is against the law of reason. If we should interpret reason as rectified reason (especially primarily and originally), it would be the same as the law of nature. I rather choose to admit an interpretation that will bring the most doubts under disputation and therefore into clarity.

Reason, therefore, in this place shall signify conclusions drawn and deduced from the primary reason by our discourse and ratiocination. Thus sin against reason is sin against such arguments and conclusions as by sound consequence may be derived from primary and original reason, which is the light of nature.

This primary reason, against which nobody can plead license, law, custom, or pardon, has in us a sovereign and masculine force. It begets conclusions and resolutions through our discourse, which does the motherly office of shaping, delivering, and rearing them.

2.—In earthly kingdoms the king's children and their posterity, as far as we may reasonably presume any tincture of blood, have many privileges and respects due them, which would be forfeited if there appeared any bastardy or interruption of lawful descent from that root. Although the respect and obsequiousness belong to them so far as they are propagated from that root and so far as some sparks of that sovereignty glimmer in them, their servants and officers take them where they find them and consider them only as dukes or lords and possessors of patrimonial estates. Meanwhile, every man's heart is directed and fastened upon the prince, and perhaps a step or two lower with a ready and immediate relation to the father and what they have from him.

Just so! When, from those true propositions that are the eldest children and the issue of our light of nature and of our discourse, conclusions are produced, those conclusions also have the nature of propositions and beget more conclusions. To all these there belongs an assent and submission on our part, if none by the way has been corrupted and bastarded by fallacy. Although, as in the other case, men who are of a weak, lazy, or flattering disposition look no farther into any of these propositions than from whose

mouth it proceeds or what authority it now has (not from whence it was produced), still, every man's resolution is fixed upon, arrested by, and submitted to the heir apparent—which is to say, every necessary deduction by natural light. Now human laws, by which kingdoms are policed, are not so very near to this crown of certain truth and first light. If they were necessary consequences from that law of nature, they would not be contrary in various places and times, as we see laws to be. Nevertheless, I justly esteem them nearer and to have more of that royal blood in them than the resolutions of individual men or schools of men.

The first reason is: It is of the essence of all human law that it agrees with nature—I mean obligation in the inner court of conscience. Without this, a law has no more strength than a usurper whom those who obey watch for an opportunity to dispossess.

The second reason is: Assemblies of parliaments, councils, and courts are to be presumed more diligent for delivering and giving birth to those children of natural law. They also give better testimonies than any one man can that no false or suppositious issue is admitted. The law is well called the marriage-contract between the citizens and the republic. That term signifies also that to which they have all betrothed themselves, such as the security and stipulation that the state gives for every man's direction and assurance in all his civil actions. Since in the first part we thoroughly examined whether self-homicide is always of necessity against the law of nature, it is worthy for the first consideration in this second part to inquire how far human laws have determined against it, before we descend to the arguments of particular authors, of whatever reverence or authority.

3. The third reason is: In this disquisition the most general law has the most force and value, and there is no law so general that it deserves the name of the law of nations, or, if there is, it will be the same (as we said before) as rectified reason and thus not differ from the law of nature.

In my understanding, the civil or imperial law once had the greatest extent. Even now it is not being abandoned in its reason, essence, and nature but only lest accepting it should testify some dependence upon the [Holy Roman] Empire. Thus we owe the first place in this consideration to that law.

What do we call the civil law? Properly speaking, the municipal law of every nation is civil law. However, because Rome's emperors deemed the whole world to be one city, as Rome's bishops deem it to be one diocese,

the Roman law has won the name of civil law. It is a digest and ordering of all the regal laws, decrees of the senate, plebescites, opinions of experts, and edicts of emperors from 1,400 years before Justinian to as long a time after him as the eastern emperors made them authentic. The civil law is of such largeness that Justinian's part of it consists of 150,000 distinctions (he calls them verses) and is the sum and marrow of many millions, extracted from 2,000 volumes.

This law is so abundant that almost all the points controverted between the Roman and the Reformed Churches may be decided and resolved by it. This law, I say, which has worked upon individuals, fortunes, and consciences both by penalties and anathemas, has pronounced nothing against the self-homicide that we now have under consideration.

It is true that we find one rescript of Hadrian the emperor, who was about 120 years after Christ, in the body of the law: "If a soldier attempts to kill himself and does not accomplish it, unless he tried it under unbearable grief, sickness, sorrow, or some other cause, he shall be capitally punished." This rescript is repeated in another title, and there—although the first general clause or some other cause might seem to have gone far enough—are added especially the excusing causes of "weariness of life, madness, or shame." You see with what moderate gradations this law proceeded. Contending and wrestling (as it seems) with a customary and naturally accomplished act, it does not extend at all to punish self-homicide when it has been done, as the law does in many other crimes by confiscation, by condemning the memory of the delinquent, and by degrading his posterity.

Nor does the rescript embrace all ways of doing it—indeed, hardly any of them, considering how benignly and favorably penal laws are to be interpreted. Nor does it encompass all men, but only those currently in the army, since much disadvantage might befall the army if numbers of them should suddenly be allowed to take this natural, easy way of delivering themselves from painful danger. Just as much damage might befall the state if the enlisted soldiers—to whom there belonged by the laws as many privileges and immunities under the Roman emperors as ever did to the clergy under their Roman bishops—after they had thus maimed themselves and defrauded the state of their service, should by this inherent character of soldiership enjoy all the advantages that the laws afforded them.

One more law in the body of civil law seems to reach farther, because it does not bind itself to any one condition of men; that is, "If a man who,

already accused or caught in the act of any crime for which his goods would be forfeited upon conviction, should kill himself before judgment, his goods shall be forfeited." Or it may *not* reach farther, for the law adds this opinion of the act: "It is not the deed's evil that is liable to punishment but the guilt of conscience." It goes on, "He who has reason to die may have an heir." Thus the law presumes that there *are* just causes to work this effect.

Upon the consideration of this civil law I determined to bestow this first distinction.

Distinction II

1. What they call the canon law is of even larger extent than the civil, for it reaches to bind the princes themselves, at least by their acceptance of and submission to it. As its subject is greater, being people and princes, so is its object, being the next or eternal life. Indeed, it is so vast and unbounded that we do not know in what books to seek its limits nor by what rules to set the landmarks of its jurisdiction.

As for the book, it is evident that the primitive church had canonical codes, which were inserted into the body of the Roman law and had no other existence except as it was incorporated there. Thus Gelasius wrote to Theodoric the Gothic king of Italy, pleading that, just as by his authority the Roman law was observed in civil matters, so it might be the same in ecclesiastical matters. After the expulsion of the Goths, Leo IV pleaded for and obtained the same from Lothair I. From this canonical code the emperors decided and decreed in many ecclesiastical causes. From this code the subsequent councils were governed in making their canons; we may see particular canons of this book cited—the book often called for in councils and commonly named, the Body of the Canon Law. This body consisted of the canons of nine councils authorized by the emperors.

There have been immense additions to it since that time—bulls and decretal letters of popes; decrees of suspicious, partial, and schismatic councils (for nothing is more properly schism and a breach of succession than a rent between the civil and ecclesiastical state, which occasioned many of the later councils); the rags of Fathers excerpted and digested by Gratian plus the glosses on these that became as authentic as the text. I do not see what all these additions have to do with the Body of Canon Law, except where princes have incorporated and naturalized them.

However, since for us to quarrel now with their authority may seem a subterfuge and a shift to turn away from them as though they were heavily against us in the matter at hand, we shall accept them as they are set forth and disguise nothing in them that seems to resist our opinion. In the common usage this law is likely to be severe against self- homicide. The civil laws always content themselves with any excuse or color in favor of the delinquents, because when a fault is proved it is punished severely. But canon laws, which punish only medicinally and for the soul's health, are apt to presume or believe guiltiness on light evidence, because their punishments always work good effects, whether or not they are just.

2. Because heresy, which is treason against divine majesty, is of all crimes the principal object of that court, I say there is nothing at all heretical about self-homicide, according to anything extant in the canon law. This is true, even allowing the widest definition of heresy, which (according to Simancas) is, "Anything against catholic faith; that is, scriptures rightly understood, or the traditions and definitions of the church or general councils lawfully gathered, or definition of the apostolic see, or the common opinion of the Fathers, in a matter of faith."

Self-homicide may perhaps to some seem possessed of bad qualities. It may be ill-sounding, audacious, or perhaps discreet heresy. But all of these proceed from the indisposition and distempered taste of the accuser, who must not always be idly flattered and pampered but invited to the search and discovery of truth; otherwise, the accuser, even if he is the greatest prince in the world, would have no access to his realm but be cramped in a wretched corner.

We may cast a glance upon each part of the definition of heresy. The question whether or not self-homicide is against the scriptures rightly understood will be more properly and naturally examined when we come to the last part of this essay, concerning divine law. Next, there is no tradition or definition at all by the church on self-homicide, much less as a matter of faith, which is the second limb of the definition. There is no decree by any general council. There is no rescript or bull by any pope.

What about the common opinion of the Fathers? We lay aside the fact that this cannot be a safe rule because, as Azorius notes, "Controverters on both sides often say that theirs is the common opinion, and certainly what is the common opinion in one age is not that in another. Indeed, what is common opinion in one kingdom at the same time is not that in another

kingdom, although both are Catholic. In Germany and France by common opinion adoration is not due to the cross but in Spain by common opinion it is." It cannot appear from the canon law that there is a common opinion of the Fathers against self-homicide. Gratian, who alone of the compilers of canon law, as far as either my reading or search has discovered, touches the point, cites only two Fathers, Augustine and Jerome, and the latter is of the opinion that there may be some cause to do it. But in the canon law I find no words either to lay upon it the infamous name of heresy, or to label it with the mark or style of sin, or to condemn the deed by inflicting any punishment on the offender!

I speak here of that canon law with which the canonists deal, the decretal letters and all the extravagants [i e., the originally uncodified decretals]. That learned and ingenious bishop of Tarragon, Antonio Agustin, has taught us what we should think of Gratian's *Decretal.* He says, "He is hardly worth much reprehension who, having nothing that is profitable or of use unless he borrows it, is admired by the ignorant and laughed at by the learned, who never saw the books of the council, nor the works of the Fathers, nor the registers of the pope's letters, and whose compilation lacked the confirmation by Eugenius III that is falsely attributed to it." At any rate, Gratian does not have so much authority that by his inserting an imperial law or fragment of a Father it should therefore be canonized and grafted into the body and force of canon law. For then, even if that law was abrogated by the emperor, it would still be alive and bind by a stronger obligation in the canon, which Alberigo Gentili proves to be against the common opinion! Still, by consent this much is afforded Gratian, that texts cited by him have as much authority in him as they had in the author from whom he took them. Therefore, when we come to handle in their proper place the reasons of particular authors, we omit none whom Gratian has cited.

3. In this distinction we handle the opinion of the canon law on self-homicide, not because Gratian cites it but because the canons of all councils are now appropriated as canon law. So we shall consider a canon he cites from the Councils of Braga.

First, although he does not cite it, we shall not conceal the Council of Auxerre, which was held (before the other) under Gregory the Great in the year 590. The civil laws, by limitation of persons and causes, gave some restraint and correction to this natural desire to die when we wish. They did

so out of a need to sinew and strengthen as far as they were able the doctrine of our blessed savior, who, having ended all bloody sacrifices, enlightens us with another doctrine, that to endure the miseries and afflictions of this life is wholesome and advantageous to us. The Councils, also perceiving that this first engrafted and inborn desire needed all possible restraints, contributed their help.

This canon, then, has these words, “If any kill themselves, oblations in that instance shall not be received.” It seems that preaching and catechizing had wrestled and fought with the Christian’s natural appetite and tamed them to perplexity as to whether or not it might be done. Thinking to make sure work in an indiscreet devotion, they gave oblations to the church to expiate the fault—if there were any. The Council forbids receiving these oblations. However, it decrees nothing on the point as a matter of faith, only providing against an inconvenient practice. What it decreed was not very obligatory or considerable, since it was only a diocesan council of one bishop and his abbots, one whose canons Binius presents because, he says, although some of them are out of use (of which this may be one), they tell us something about antiquity.

The other council that Gratian cites—and besides these two I find none—has these words, “For those who kill themselves there shall be no commemoration at the oblation, nor shall they be brought to burial with psalms.” This intimates, as the language of the canon law has it, a dog’s burial.

But the gloss on this borrows from another canon, that if the person was not under excommunication, it is of no effect, “For we may communicate with him dead with whom we may communicate living.” This shows that his act of dying in this way put him into no worse state in this respect. This answers the first punishment inflicted by that canon.

As for the second, which is denial of Christian burial, it is very severe to conclude from that the heinousness of the act, since the true canon law denies Christian burial to men slain at a tilting, even though it affords them, if they are not already dead, all the sacraments applicable in that extremity—penance, eucharist, and unction. Although this gloss denies burial to men whom they deem in a state and way of salvation, it gathers reasonably that “This punishment does not reach to the dead but works only to deter the living,” referring to this purpose an epistle of Gregory the Great that says,

“So much as a sumptuous funeral profits a wicked man, just so much a base funeral or none at all harms a godly man.”

Last, there is the Clementine canon that lists many causes for which Christian burial is denied. One of them is a local interdict concerning the time when the holiest man who dies in some place cannot be buried, and the rule sometimes extends to whole kingdoms! This canon instructs us sufficiently that one may be subject to such punishment (if it is in any law) and still not be guilty of such a crime as this one is reputed to be.

The Romans in their religious discipline refused solemn burial to any who perished by lightnings. However, they buried offenders in the town, as they did vestals and emperors, since their dedication to God had delivered the nuns and their sovereignty had delivered the emperors from the bondage of law. So did justice, to which they had made full satisfaction, deliver punished offenders. Since both Saint Jerome and the Councils of Braga inflict upon those catechumens who, although they had all other preparations and degrees of maturity in the Christian faith, departed this world without baptism, the same punishments as they do upon self-murderers, making them equal in punishment and consequently in guiltiness, I think it ill becomes the doctrines of our times and the analogy to pronounce so desperately the damnation either of the unbaptized or of self- homicides.

Here we end our second distinction of this second part, which was allotted to the examination of the canon law.

Distinction III

1. Among arguments that are conclusions deduced out of reason and discourse, after these general laws of the empire and of the church I may justly rank the laws of particular states. (Those of the church might seem to merit first consideration by virtue of their generality; we handled them second because their power has always been litigious and questionable).

According to our English law, therefore, he who kills himself is reckoned as one who commits a felony against himself. This law has not been long in practice, for Bracton seems not to know it; in an entire chapter on the title he only repeats the words in the imperial law that I cited before and so acknowledges that if he admitted that law he would admit the exception, without just cause. Whether or not this felon against himself is chargeable

with any offense, he forfeits his goods. These goods, devolving to the king's almoner, are to be employed on the king's behalf in pious and charitable uses. According to this law, the deed is not only homicide but also murder. But the reasons alleged are only that the king has lost a subject, that his peace is broken, and that it is an evil example.

In my understanding, this law has no foundation in natural or imperial law, nor does it receive much force from those three reasons, having by custom alone put on the nature of law, as most of our law has. I believe it was first introduced among us because we were excessive in the natural desire of dying in this way. What has led us back from it is not a better understanding of nature but the wisdom of lawmakers and observers of things fit for the institution and conservation of states.

In ancient commonwealths the numbers of slaves were infinite. Both in Rome and in Athens there were always ten slaves for every citizen. Pliny says that in Augustus's time Isidorus had more than 4,000 and Vedius Pollio so many that he always fed his fish in ponds with their blood. Since such servitude has eroded, the number of wretched men still exceeds the happy, for every laborer is miserable and beastlike compared to the idle, abounding men. It was therefore thought necessary by laws and by the opinions of religion—as Scaevola is alleged to have said, "One expects states to be deceived about religion"—to take from these weary and mascerated wretches their ordinary and open escape and ease, voluntary death.

Therefore, self-homicide, like hunting and usury, seems to be prohibited, as a lawyer says, "Lest men be enticed." Thus, to withdraw his nation from wine Muhammad brought them to a religious belief that in every grape there was a devil.

What among us is a natural disease, stealing—for like all others this vice may abound in a nation as well as in a particular man, and Doro- theus relates at length the sickness of one of his friars who could not abstain from stealing, although he had no use for what he stole—has drawn from a Council held at London under Henry III a canon that excommunicates the harborers of thieves, "Who thereby abound in the kingdom of England." The canon mentions no fault except this one. And from custom, princes, and parliaments come severer laws against theft than are justifiable by nature or by the Jews' judicial law (Exod. 22:1). For our law hangs a man for stealing in extreme necessity, even though such necessity brings him to consider all things as originally belonging to the community, and even

though he is bound in conscience to steal and, according to some opinions, would be a self-murderer if he did not steal.

Duns Scotus, disputing against the laws of those nations that allow the death of a thief who robs by day, because whoever kills such a thief is expressly by God's law a murderer, asks, Where have you read of excepting such a thief from the law, "You shall not kill" (Exod. 20:13)? Or where have you seen a [papal] bull fallen from heaven to justify such executions? It may be that a natural leaning in our people to such a manner of death weakened the state and might have occasioned severer laws than the common ground of all laws seems to support.

Therefore, when the emperor made a law to stop a common abuse of impious men, decreeing that no man might give anything to the clergy, not even by bequest, Saint Jerome said, "I lament and grieve, not that such a law is made, but that our manners have deserved such a law." Just so, in contemplating these laws, I mourn that the infirmity and sickness of our nation needs such medicines.

The same must be said of a similar law in the earldom of Flanders. If it is true that they allow the confiscation of goods in only five cases, of which self-homicide is one, thus ranking it with treason, heresy, sedition, and deserting the army against the Turk, then these are strong and urgent circumstances to reduce this desire in men.

2.—Where you find many severe laws against an offense, you do not safely conclude an extreme enormity or heinousness in the fault. You safely infer a propensity of that people at that time to that fault. For this reason, Ignatius and many others—even entire councils—were forced to pronounce that those who fasted on Sundays were murderers of Christ. So in France the laws abound against duels, to which they are head- longly apt. So the resolutions of the Spanish casuists and the bulls of the popes are repeated and exaggerated in that nation against bull-fighting, to which they are so enormously addicted. Still, of itself bull-fighting is no sin, as Navarrus, retracting his opinion after seventy years, at last holds.

These severe laws no more increase a fault than mild punishments diminish it. No man thinks rape a small fault, although Solon punishes it, if the victim is a virgin and free-born, with money that would amount to our five shillings. The Salic Law punishes pecuniarily and at no high price a witch convicted of having eaten a man. Therefore, Bartolus allows that, in cases of public profit or detriment, the judges may extend an odious and

burdensome law beyond the letter and restrain a favorable and beneficial law within it, even though this is against the nature and common practice of both these laws.

If, therefore, our law and the Flemish law are severe in punishing self-homicide, and if this argument has more force because more nations concur in such laws, it may well be answered that everywhere men are inclinable to it. This goes far to establish our opinion, considering that none of those laws that prescribe civil restraints from doing it can make it sin. The act is not much discredited if it is evil only because it is so forbidden and if it binds the conscience only to the general precept of obedience to the law or to the forfeiture of goods.

3.—It seems from the practice of the Jews (for Josephus speaks of it as a usual thing) that they did not bury until the sun set those who killed themselves. I do not know upon what law of theirs they grounded this, and I do not find out from writers about their policies since the dispersion. (They have no magistracy but live under the laws of the places into which they are admitted, in all cases except where they are exempted by privilege.) Still, they do testify to a particular detesting of some sins by public penances among themselves. For theft they bind, whip, and enjoin to public confession, and for adultery the offender sits naked for a day—in winter in freezing water and in summer on an anthill or among hives of bees. Although I do not find from Galatino, Sigonio, Buxtorf, or Molther that self-homicide was or is usual among them, still, because Josephus says it (although only oratorically), we shall accept it and believe that it was done for the reason common to almost all nations, to deter men from doing it and not to punish its being done. Of similar use—that is, in deterrence—was the law of the Athenians, who after death cut off the hand that perpetrated that deed, which law Josephus remembers in the same place.

4. The reason that is grounded upon the edict of Tarquinius Priscus proves no more than the above. When this desire of death reigned among his men like a contagion, he cured it by an opprobrious hanging up of their bodies and exposing them to birds and beasts. The same holds for the way of restraining the Virgins of Miletus. When they had a wan- toness of dying thus and did it for fashion, they were by decree dishonorably exhibited naked as a spectacle to the people. Neither case prevails farther than the previous argument. Each proves only a watchful solicitude in every state by

all means to avert men from this natural love of ease, by which their strength in numbers would have been very much impaired.

So we end this distinction.

Distinction IV

We will now proceed to those reasons that particular men have used for detesting this action. First, we will pay our debt to Gratian by considering the texts he cited. Afterwards in this distinction, the other reasons of authors who were theologians (unless they are grounded in verses of scripture, which we postpone for the last part) shall have their ventilation.

1. The first text is an epistle of Saint Augustine to Donatus the heretic, who, having been apprehended by the Catholics, fell from his horse and would have drowned himself. He afterward complained of violence used toward him in matters of religion, wherein he claims freedom of election and conscience. Saint Augustine answers that we have the power to try to save our souls against our wills, as it is lawful for us thus to save our bodies. If you were constrained to do evil, even so you ought not kill yourself. Consider whether in the scriptures you find any of the faithful who did so when they suffered much from those who would have forced them to do things to their souls' destruction.

I shall speak a little of Saint Augustine in general, because almost all the reasons of others are derived from him. He was writing purposely about self-homicide from the seventeenth to the twenty-seventh chapters of the first book of *On the City of God.* Now the writers on confession in our times, comparing Navarrus and Soto, two of the greatest casuists, decide sometimes that Navarrus is sounder and more learned but Soto more useful and applicable to practical divinity. Just so, I say that for sharp insight and conclusive judgment in exposition of places of scripture, which he always makes so liquid and pervious, Saint Augustine has hardly been equaled by any of all the writers in the church of God. (Except that Calvin may have that honor, and where it does not concern points in controversy I see the Jesuits themselves often follow him; although they dare not name him, they pay him high respect and reverence.)

In practical learning and moral divinity Saint Augustine was so fastidious, refined, and rigorous a conscience—perhaps to redeem his former licentiousness, for such converts often happen to be extremely

zealous—that for our direction in the conduct of this life, Saint Jerome and some others may be thought sometimes fitter to adhere to than Saint Augustine. But I do not say this as though we needed this medicament for this text. For I agree with Saint Augustine that neither to avoid occasion of sin nor for any other cause wherein I myself am merely or principally interested may I do this act, which also serves justly for an answer to the same zealous Father in the other text cited by Gratian. For with him I confess that "He who kills himself is so much the more guilty therein as he was guiltless of the fact for which he killed himself."

Nevertheless, by the way, this principle may not pass generally without admitting the exception carried by the rule of law on which it is grounded, "No one without guilt ought to be punished unless there is an offsetting cause." And so, like Saint Augustine, we may say with as much earnestness, "This we assert, this we say, this we approve in every respect, that neither to avoid temporal trouble, nor to remove from others the occasion to sin, nor to punish our own past sins, nor to prevent future sins, nor out of desire for the next life, where these are the only or the principal considerations, can it be lawful for any man to kill himself." But neither Saint Augustine nor we deny that, if there are cases where the party is disinterested and the glory of God is only or primarily respected and advanced, self-homicide may be lawful.

Valens the emperor surprised Iamblicus when his divining cock had described three letters of the name of the person who would succeed him and slew all whose names were Theodorus, Theodotes, or Theodulus, but he let off Theodosius, who fulfilled the prophecy. In the same way, Saint Augustine has condemned those causes that we do not defend and has omitted those in which it is justifiable.

This case is hard to discern and distinguish from others arising from human infirmity. If the rule that Antonio de Côrdoba gives in cases of simony is, as he says it is, a good guide in all perplexities, it will help very much. He says that in the case of simony many difficulties arise, since not only (by clear and common judgments) temporal reward may be taken for spiritual offices by way of gifts, stipends, wages, alms, sustenance, or fulfilling the law or custom of a place, but also according to some doctors even by way of price and bargain, if not directly for the spiritual part thereof then for the labor necessarily attached to it. Since not every curate can distinguish in these cares, he bids them, "Always do it with an intention to

do it as God knows it may be done and as wise men know and would teach that it might be done. For, humbly remitting ourselves to instruction by the learned who are our fathers, whatever defect may be in us, let us be saved by the parents' faith." In this way Pindar, making an implicit prayer to God that he would give him what he knew to be best for him, died in that very petition.

Since Saint Augustine has in his decision the qualification that a better life never receives a man after a death of which he himself was guilty, we will be as bold with him as one who is more obliged to him than we. Thyraeus, repeating Augustine's opinion that the devil could not possess a body unless he entered into it by sin, rejects the opinion and says, "The holy Father speaks not of what must of necessity be, but of what for the most part actually is."

2.—In our case I think we ought to follow Saint Jerome's temper. In his exposition of the book of Jonah (I wonder why Gratian cited it, being so far from his aim and advantage) he says, "In persecution I may not kill myself unless [original: without this, where] chastity is endangered." Here I am far from agreeing with Gratian that '"without this' is inclusively spoken and amounts to the phrase, 'not even if [original: no not though]," for I think that good and learned Father, Jerome, included in the word "chastity" all purity of religion and manners, and to a man so rectified death comes always and in every way seasonably and welcome. For "As death finds a man, so a man finds death."

3.—From this text Saint Jerome, I believe, and some others whom I perhaps have not read, and from some other texts in others, charitably dissent. Lavater, having profited from all of Peter Martyr's reasons mostly against self-homicide and adding some of his own when they both handle the duties of Saul, confesses that in this case of preserving chastity Augustine, Chrysostom, Lactantius, and Jerome departed from the opinion of those who condemned this act.

4.—Peter Martyr also presents one other reason of which he seems glad and well contented; namely, that we must not hasten death because death is an evil. But this reason is not worthy of his gravity, especially so long after Clement of Alexandria had so thoroughly defeated that opinion. For even if it is an evil, it is only an evil of punishment, and that is an evil of which God is the author. It is not that evil by which we are evil, neither does it always prove the patient to be evil (although God for all that is always just),

for Christ himself said of the man born blind, “Neither he nor his parents have sinned” (John 9:5).

Concerning that evil of punishment, which is deemed the greatest of temporal afflictions in this life because of the close danger of impairing our soul (that is, to be possessed), Thyraeus, drawing on Saint Jerome and Chrysostom, says that it is not always inflicted only for sin but also to manifest the glory of God. The greatest evil of this kind that can be imagined, which is “Damnation, has less of the essence of evil than has the least sin that brings us damnation,” says Aquinas. Death is therefore an act of God’s justice, and when he is pleased to inflict it he may choose his officer and choose me myself as well as anybody else.

Even if it were the worst sort of evil, still, as Saint Augustine says, “In the act of marriage there is a good use of evil, that is of concupiscence, which is an evil adulterers evilly use.” The good Paulinus praises Sulpicius Severus because “He, having the liberty of sinning in marriage, did not depart from his accustomed austerity.” The same may be said of death in some cases, as in martyrdom.

Although Peter Martyr urges further that death is called God’s “enemy” (I Cor. 15:26) and is therefore evil, Musculus says about that text, “Death is often commended in scripture because God uses it for the faithful to good ends and makes it work toward salvation.” By what authority can they so assuredly pronounce that it happens in our case of self-homicide? Besides, death has already lost much of its natural malignity and is not now so evil as it naturally was at first. Calvin notes, “It is already so destroyed that it is not lethal but only grievous.”

5.—Peter Martyr offers another reason of his own, that life is a gift, and because it is the gift of God it may not be refused. When we have agreed with him that it may not be unthriftily and prodigally cast away, how can he conclude from self-homicide such an ingratitude as that I shall forsake God’s glory? May I in no case lay down my life? How can “I may never” follow from “I must not always”?

6.—Lavater, following many others, urges that because judges are established for the purpose, no man should take dominion over himself. But in the Church of England, where auricular confession is neither under precept nor much in practice (the idea that we do not allow it at all or reject it as the Waldenses did, although a reverend man said it, is more than I ever knew), who is the judge of sin, against which no civil law provides or of

which there is no evidence? May not I accuse and condemn myself to myself and inflict what penance I will to punish the past, avoiding similar occasion of sin?

Upon this reason turns that perplexed question of whether the pope may not give himself absolution from acts and vows, and partake of his own indulgences. By the best opinions it is agreed that to do so is an act of jurisdiction, which by Lavater's rule no man may exercise upon himself. The imperial laws generally forbid anybody to be judge in his own cause, but all the commentators make an exception of sovereigns. Concerning ordinary judges, all agree with Baldus that "In a notorious deed if the dignity of the judge is concerned, he is the proper judge of it." He also says, "It belongs to the chief magistrate to judge whether or not such a cause belongs under his judgment." With a "notwithstanding" to natural law, as the words of the privilege have it, Theodoric allowed bishops to be judges in their own cause. So "If a son who had not been judge in his own cause, had been made consul, he might have emancipated himself or authorized another to have adopted him."

Moreover, it appears that the popes have exercised jurisdiction upon themselves, even before they were popes. John XXII, having permission to choose one pope, chose himself, which deed Nauclerus relates and justifies. According to canonical rules, it is plain that he may exercise jurisdiction upon himself in any case where there is not a distinction of persons enjoined by the law of God, as in baptism—which will not be stretched in our case.

Certainly the reason for the law that none should be judge in his own cause is that everyone is presumed to favor himself. Therefore, if the law is dispensable in some cases that are beneficial to a man, much more may it be so in cases of inflicting punishment, in which nobody is imagined to be overly strict on himself. Even if man were by nature as slavish as the "Essenes were by profession and rule, who had power over themselves only in serving and being compassionate," except when self- homicide becomes an act of advantage to ourselves, we have enough jurisdiction to do it. It is more certainly proved that in some cases derogatory and prejudicial to us we have this right over ourselves, that every man may become judge in his own cause and not exercise the privilege.

Everybody condemned Gregory XII in the Great Schism when, after he had promised to depart from the papacy by an oath in which there was a

clause that he should neither ask, give, nor accept absolution from that oath, he induced his mendicants to preach that it would be a mortal sin for him utterly to relinquish power over the church. Many kings at their own pleasure have departed from their governments and relieved themselves of their burdens. What one says of the whole church may be said of every particular member, “It was always in political bondage but not in spiritual bondage.”

If there are cases in which one may—assuredly or probably, after just diligence has been used—decide to do something because of an illumination from the spirit of God or from a ceasing of the reason of the law at that time in him, that man is then judge in his own cause.

Although in cases where there is a proper court I am bound by it, yet as two kings who are both sovereigns may justly decide a cause by war because there can be no competent judge between them, just so, in secret cases between the spirit of God and my conscience of which there is no certainly constituted, exterior judge, we are ourselves sufficient to do all the offices. Then, delivered from all bondage and restored to our natural liberty, we are in the same condition as princes. If in the strictest sense they may not properly be said to give themselves privileges, still they have one general, inherent privilege, for, when they will, they may declare that in that particular case they will not take a new privilege but exercise their old one.

7.—Because Josephus has one reason that smacks of theology, we will consider it here. He says our soul is a small part of God, deposited and committed in trust to us, and we may not neglect or dislodge it before God withdraws it. We are still on safe ground in saying that whenever I may justly depart this life it is by a summons from God, and it cannot then be imputed to any corruption of my will. For “He who yields to authority is believed not to exercise his will.” I expect there was never a particular inspiration or a new commission, such as they are forced to purchase for Samson and the rest of the self-homicides, except from that resident and inherent grace of God by which he excites us to works of moral or higher virtues.

Therefore, when anything for which we are the depositaries is called for again, is would be a greater injustice in us to deny or withhold it than if we were debtors—just so, not to depart from Josephus’s allusion or metaphor of a deposit. If it was a fault to let go that of which I am depositary before it was truly called for, still with an erring conscience I would be excusable,

for it is “Of the essence of a deposit that the depositary is held for what is lost by deceit, not by fault,” according to Soto. Indeed, when I have a secret from another, given in trust, in all respects I hold it in the nature of a deposit, and yet nobody doubts that in many cases I may share this secret.

8.—Many metaphorical and allegorical reasons scattered among authors, as in Cicero and Macrobius, were made more for illustration than for argument or answer. I will not stand to glean among them, since they are almost all bound up in one sheaf in that oration of Josephus, or else will be fitly handled in those texts of scripture that make such allusions.

9.—In that oration Josephus gives one reason drawn from the way we deal with enemies. We count them enemies who make attempts on our lives. Shall we be enemies to ourselves? Since in this text Josephus speaks to save his own life, he may justly be thought to speak more sincerely and dispassionately. Where in the person of Eleazar he persuades people to kill themselves, there is neither certain truth in the assertion nor in the consequence. But do we count God or the magistrate our enemy when death is inflicted by them? Do not martyrs, in whose death God is glorified, kiss their executioners and the instruments of their death? Is it unlawful, unnatural, or inexpedient for us in many cases to be our own enemies when we deny ourselves many things agreeable to our sensitive nature and inflict upon ourselves many things repugnant to that nature? This was abundantly shown in the first part.

10.—In the same oration Josephus has another allusory argument: “A servant who runs away is to be punished by the law, even if his master is severe; much more, if we run away from so indulgent a master as God is to us.” Not to give strength or delight to this reason by affording a long or diligent answer, we say that in self-homicide the servant runs not *from* his master but *to* him and at his call obeys his voice. Still, it is as truly as it is devoutly said, “The devil is overcome by resisting, but the world and the flesh by running away.” And the farther the better!

11.—His last point that is of any taste is, “In a tempest it is the part of an idle and treacherous pilot to sink the ship.” But I say that if in a tempest we must cast the most precious ware overboard to save the lives of the passengers, and the merchant who suffers loss thereby cannot impute this to anybody or remedy it himself, how much more may I, when I am weather-beaten and in danger of betraying the precious soul that God has embarked in me, put off this burdensome flesh until it becomes his pleasure that I shall

resume it? This is not to sink the ship but to retire it to safe harbor and assured anchor.

Thus our fourth distinction, which was to embrace the reasons proposed by particular authors, whether sacred or profane, oblique and metaphorical as well as direct, shall here be ended.

Distinction V

1. Another sort of reason is produced from the grounds of the moral virtues, of which Saint Thomas Aquinas proposes two that we delimit for this distinction. Saint Augustine's reason, that it is against fortitude, has another bearing. Aquinas says it is against justice and against charity.

As to the reason that it is against justice, there are two aspects. The first is that the self-homicide steals a person and member of the body from the universe or from the state to which his service is due. The second is that he usurps the right of God.

The first may as well be said of all who, withdrawing themselves from functions in the commonwealth, defraud the state of their assistance and attend only to their own ends, whether in this life or the next. Certainly to do even that so intently that we neglect our office in society is the same offense in kind as this one. Although many follow Aquinas here, Navarro, Sayer, and others have a better reason for the opinion that this cannot be a sin against justice.

As for the second reason, I say it does not usurp God's authority or deal with another's servant if I become God's servant, delegate, and commissioner in self-homicide, when in no other way he can be so much glorified. Surely the passage from this life to the next is not generally left to our free will, and nobody is properly lord of his own life. Still, according to Sayer, "Although we do not have the dominion, we do have the use of this life, and it is lawful for us to lose that use when we will." How little and narrow a distance there is between negative and positive killing and how contiguous they are, we shall see in another place. If, therefore, the reason why we may not die by self-homicide is because we are not lords of our own life but God alone is lord of it, then the state cannot take away our life, for "It is no more lord of our life than we are," says Sayer; that is, the state cannot do it except in cases where it is God's officer.

If by self-homicide any injury were done to the state, then certainly it would be in the power of the state to license a man to do it, and with such license he would be excusable in conscience. For the state to do so would be only to cede its own right, which anybody may lawfully do. Finally, if the state were injured by self-homicide, the state might lawfully recover its damage from the heirs and goods of the delinquent. However, except in those places where express laws allow it, this cannot be done. I think the better opinion, to judge by the number of authors, is that if the person is of necessary use to that state, there are in self- homicide some degrees of injustice, but no more than if a general of much use should retire into a monastery.

If we could safely take the decision that self-homicide is not against justice, we would ease ourselves of all the labor that must be spent on the third part. Since the foundation of that part will be principally the commandment, “You shall not kill” (Exod. 20:13), if this killing is not against justice, it breaks no part of the Decalogue and thus is not a sin.

Should any consider self-homicide an injustice to ourselves, Aquinas in the same text clears that up. Were it possible for a man to injure himself, which it is not, this injury might oftentimes be such as Cicero says of his banishment, “In no way an expelling, but an improving,” considering how much happiness might recompense it.

Because charity is not properly a moral virtue, and because many of the scriptural texts that we must handle in the last part are built on this ground of charity, we will not examine whether or not it is against charity until we come to that part. Here I will only say that, although it is still under dispute and questionable whether or not self-homicide is against charity, it is certainly against charity to pronounce so desperately against those who fall into it as men are used to doing.

2. Aristotle suggests two reasons that are derived from the rules of moral virtue. Observing that this kind of death caught men by two baits, ease and honor, against those who die to avoid misery he teaches that death is the greatest misery that can befall us. Leaving aside the question of how it can agree with the rest of his doctrine, for its purpose this was the most slippery and devious argument. Then, so that honor and fame might draw none to it, he says, “It is cowardliness and dejection, and the argument of a tender and impatient mind.”

We have already spoken about the first charge in answer to one of Peter Martyr's reasons. About the other one we shall have occasion to say enough when we come to a place where Saint Augustine says the same thing. Therefore, we may relieve this distinction of that business.

Distinction VI

1.—Having considered the reasons that are found in the best authors, and having shown such rules as serve for the true understanding of them and of all others that spring from the same or similar topics, before we terminate this second part concerning the law of reason, we must also touch those reasons in *favor* of our side that others have produced and that we may produce. According to these, self-homicide may be affirmed either wholly or in part.

I shall not stop long upon the law and practice in Rome, that anybody who had his causes approved by the Senate might kill himself. About this Quintilian frames a case. A son, who by astrologers' predictions was to kill first many enemies and then his father, having in the wars performed the first part makes petition to the Senate that before he comes to perform the last part he be allowed to kill himself. Quintilian argues for the son, with many reasons applicable to his particular case and to our main question. But I shall hasten to our chief strength.

2.—It will shed much light on this business if we compare desertion with destruction and consider where and how they differ. Certainly, in Almighty God it is not the same thing to forsake and to destroy, because he owes us nothing and always in his forsakings there are degrees of mercy, since he might justly destroy us and then afterwards at his good pleasure return again to us.

It is otherwise between men who are mutual debtors and naturally bound to one another, for a magistrate or minister who abandons his charge and neglects it destroys it. So says Agapetus the Deacon to Justinian the emperor, "For subjects commission but for princes omission is a vice." Indeed, a private man who does not but could and should hinder a man's wrong performs the fault. "If you have not fed one who is dying of hunger, you have slain him," says Ambrose. Also, "That clergyman who does not hinder a manslaughter if he can is thereby suspended." He who denies himself necessary things or exposes himself inordinately to dangers that

men usually do not escape kills himself. He who is as sure that this medicine will cure him as that this poison will destroy him is as guilty if he refuses the medicine as he is if he swallows the poison. For which is less dangerous, to attend the collapsing of a house, the flooding of a stream, or the incursion of mad beasts? Those who compare omissions with commissions ask no more to make them equal than that we omit something that we could and should do!

3.—Concerning such faults as are greatest, either in their own nature or in their being beyond remedy once they are done, all laws say that every approach, even the very first step, to them carries the same guilt and is under the same punishment as the fault itself. In treason and heresy the first consent is the absolute fault. We have an example of a woman who was burned for petty treason for contriving the death of her husband, although it was not done.

Homicide is one of these crying sins that has always been reckoned among atrocities. Although the Athenians repealed by disuse all of Draco's laws because of their extreme severity, they retained those against homicide. Homicide, says Toledo, may be done five ways: by commandment, by advice, by permission, by help, or by the act itself. In the first and worst homicide, committed in Paradise, in which were employed all the persons in the world who were able to concur in evil— although there was only one man, all the millions who ever have been and ever will be were massacred at once, and himself too—as many of these kinds of homicides were found as was possible in so few persons. Reuchlin notes, "The serpent counseled, the woman helped, and Adam perpetrated" the first sin—and, we may safely say, God permitted it! If every one of these acts is a kind of homicide, no approach towards it can be lawful, if any is itself lawful, that is not homicide. Let us therefore consider how far and in how many of these ways self-homicide may be allowable.

4.—First, although the commonly received opinion is that "The one who instigates a crime and the one who perpetrates it are subject to the same punishment," we cannot properly apply the precept to ourselves, because in this act the same party must be the agent, the patient, and the instrument.

We may come close but not properly to the nature of it by the second way of advice, so that after discourse we may advisedly choose one of these roles and refuse the others, for whoever can be willing can also be unwilling. So we may wish for ourselves what is naturally evil (I mean the

evil of punishment); the hermit monk, according to Sulpicius Severus, by earnest prayer obtained from God permission to be possessed by the devil for certain months, because he found in himself an inclination to pride and security.

Certainly in some cases we may without sinning wish for death, and not only for enjoying the sight of God—so says a holy man, “For a vision of God, we long a thousand times to consign our body to death”—but also to be delivered from the encumbrances of this life. So the act can have good reasons, as Peter Martyr argues, and then says, “To refuse the better deed is corruption of the first condition.” Thus we may wish for death, even though it is so far from being lawful to wish anything that “It is sin to wish that anything naturally evil were not evil, so that we might then wish it when it was discharged of that natural evilness.” Death itself, therefore, is not evil, nor is it evil to wish for it. Is it then evil to further with more actual help that which we may lawfully wish to be done?

The two extreme religions that seem to degrade secular magistracy by subjecting monarchs either to a bishop or to a consistory willingly accept this saying, “Curse not the king, no not in your heart” (Eccl. 10:20); that is, do not wish him ill. Nor, as I observe, have the authors of either persuasion allowed in their books that the subject might wish the death of the prince except in cases where he might contribute his actual help. For both Papists and Puritans teach that a lawful king may become a tyrant, which in my understanding cannot consist with the form and right of hereditary monarchy. Still, Saravia, who pretends to go the middle way—in this case, truly the royal way—says, “We as well as the Romanists deem a king of another religion to be a tyrant” and, “It is impossible to make one a king without his being a tyrant in the opinion of one side or the other.” As for his own opinion, he writes, “No man can be bound by an oath of fidelity to the pope, because he is not indeed the vicar of God as he presumed and swore himself to be.”

Conformably with this view, that book whose title and scope is the foundation of matters of state in France (and, it pretends, in all Christendom), *Declaration et Protestation des Doctes de France*, after it has enraged subjects against tyrants and comes to declare what a tyrant is, exemplifies it in the king of Spain, and with reasons that cast whatever malignity the author is equal to upon whatever prince he chooses.

Last, whoever will compare carefully Beccaria's book with Beza's (if that other book is Beza's) will see that, although they differ diametrically in many things, still from their collision and beating together there arise abundantly the sparks of this pestilent doctrine, that as tranquility once was so religion now is the reason we admit kings and also the reason why they are not kings when they neglect religion. From these doctrines, I say, it is inferred by Carbone that "It is lawful to wish the death of a tyrant or of a favorer of heretics, even though he dies in mortal sin." To wish and to do so are naturally the same fault. Still, although it is "A sin to offer myself to martyrdom simply out of the weariness of life," according to Mazzolini, or according to Navarrus "To wish death simply out of impatience, anger, shame, poverty, or misfortune"—even to wish for heaven simply for my own happiness—nevertheless, Saint Paul certainly had some permissible reasons to desire to be released and to be with Christ.

Besides that, by his leave, we desire many things that are against the sense of nature. But to grant that we may wish death in order to be in heaven, although Peter Martyr, as noted above, is of the same persuasion, is a larger scope and somewhat more dangerous and slippery a grant than we are urging towards, because only the interest and good of the party seems to be considered. Nevertheless, Manoel de Sa extends it further: "We may wish someone's sickness for his correction. We may wish someone's death for the good of the state. We may even wish death to our enemy who is likely to do us much harm, or to avoid something particularly damaging to us. We may rejoice at our enemy's death, even for the consideration of our own deliverance." All of these hold as well if we are urged for similar reasons to wish our own death.

To conclude this point that it may be lawful to wish our own death, I shall just tell a story that, although it is only matter-of-fact, if it is that much, is of a person whose acts govern and persuade very many, as far as rules go. In the life of Philip Neri, who in our age instituted the last religious order approved and established in the Church of Rome, we read that he was entreated, as he commonly was in such desperate cases, to come to one Paulus Maximus, a youth of fourteen years, who was then ready to depart this life because of sickness. Before Neri could finish his sacrifice and the service had begun—even before the message reached him—the young man died. When he had been dead about half an hour, Neri came. After he had used some loud exclamations, the youth revived, looked up,

and talked in secret with Neri for a quarter of an hour. When the discourse ended, Neri gave him his choice, whether he would live or die, and when the boy chose death he gave him permission to die again. This was the greatest miracle in that whole book—if anybody should believe all that are in it, for there are attributed to Neri stranger things than the Book of Conformities imagined about Saint Francis. (I believe the author, like Xenophon or Plato or Sir Thomas More, meant to imagine and idealize rather than to write a credible history, although Sedulius has defended the book lately and with much earnestness.) At any rate, this much is established: whether fable or history, the opinion of those who authored this book is that it was lawful for Maximus to wish his own death, since a man of so much sanctity as Neri approved, seconded, and accomplished his choice.

5. The next species of homicide in Toledo's division is homicide by permission. When it is done to ourselves, the scholastics usually called it desertion or dereliction and negative death.

I find no instance of this species to be more obnoxious or indefensible than the one that is so common with our delinquents; namely, to stand mute at the bar of justice. To be sure, civil laws, which often force us to choose the lesser of two evils (that is to say, the least hurtful to civility and society) and must sometimes allow a particular mischief rather than a general inconvenience, may excuse standing mute at the bar. By the law of conscience, no case may become so entangled and perplexed that one is forced to choose anything naturally evil, but no man has as yet, to my knowledge, impugned our custom of standing mute. Thus it strikes me that our church as well as our state justifies this desertion of ourselves for so low and worldly a consideration as saving our temporal estate or escaping the ignominy of another death.

To discern better how far these omissions, desertions, and exposings of ourselves are allowed us, I must first interpret a rule of Soto's: "That charity begins with itself is to be understood only in spiritual things." For I may not commit a sin, in the language of the scholastics, to save the goods, honor, or life of the pope, but for temporal things I must prefer others before myself if a public profit will recompense my private damage. I must also lay down another rule from Navarrus, "That as for myself, so for my neighbor whom I an bound to love as myself" I may expose goods to safeguard honor, I may expose honor for life, and I may expose life for spiritual profit. To these I

must join a third rule from Maldonado, “That no man is at any time forced to exercise his privilege.” Writes Ennenckel, “Every man is bound to know the written law, but privileges and exemptions from that law he excusably may be ignorant of, and in such ignorance transgress them.” From this it is safely inferred that, because every man naturally has the privilege to resist force with force, he is thereby authorized to lay violent hands upon the pope’s life (as Gerson exemplifies) or upon the emperor’s (as Ennenckel exemplifies) when either of them exceeds the limits of his magistracy. For then the party becomes the deputy and lieutenant to nature, which is a sovereign common and equal to them all.

I may waive this benefit if I will, and I may suffer myself to be killed even by a thief rather than kill him in his mortal sin. Our countryman, Sayer, holds this as the common opinion from Soto, Navarrus, Cajetan, and many others. None that I have seen takes exception to it in any person other than a soldier or one who has the lives and dignities of others so wrapped up in their own that they cannot give themselves away except by betraying others. Such desertion seems to accord with natural reason, because it is found in all laws. Even in the Koran we read, “He who takes vengeance is not answerable for it, but he who patiently suffers a wrong acts best.”

Our law punishes a man who kills another in his own necessary defense with the loss of goods, and it delivers him from death not by acquittal but by pardon. This seems to me to pronounce plainly that it is not lawful to defend my life by killing another, which is farther than any of the others went. When I compare our two laws—one that if I defend myself I am punished, and the other (aforementioned) that if I kill myself I am punished in the same manner and measure—they seem to me to be somewhat perplexed and captious.

Just as I may take leave of my natural privilege of defending myself, so may I obtain help from any extrinsic or accessory source that by chance or by providence (if God does not reveal his will) is presented to me. “For a man condemned to death is not bound in conscience to redeem his life with money, although by law of place he might do it,” according to Sa. Saint Thomas Aquinas says that “He who is condemned to die kills himself if he does not seize an opportunity to escape by flight when it is presented, and likewise if he refuses meat when he is condemned to be starved,” but the whole stream is against him—Soto, Navarro, Cajetan, and Sayer. Dr. Navarrus adds that in these days a man is bound to starve rather than to eat

meat offered to idols, even though one now is not so likely to be a symbol of this idolatrous perversity.

Therefore, these authorities say that Aquinas's opinion that a man is bound to use his privilege to safeguard his life is only true when he does not waive it for some end better and worthier than our natural life. All spiritual advantages are of this sort. In these cases they all agree that we may abandon and forsake ourselves.

We may step farther yet into this kind of desertion, for we may offer ourselves for the good of our neighbor. The temporal life cannot be more precious than our soul, which, strictly speaking, is murdered by every sin consented unto. Yet Chrysostom says, "No praise is enough to give to Sarah for consenting to lie and to submit herself to adultery to save her husband's life."

I know that Saint Augustine is earnest against this point. But his earnestness turns on a matter of fact, for he denies that either Abraham or Sarah consented to any sin. When he disputes whether according to law Sarah by Abraham's consent might expose herself to save his life (Gen. 12:10-20, 20:1-18), he is also much troubled by the example of one who was prisoner under Acindynus, a prefect under Constantius, because of debt to the state. When his wife was solicited by a rich man who would give her enough to free her husband if he could possess her for one night, by her husband's consent she earned his liberty in that manner. In the end Augustine leaves it neutral for any man to think self- homicide either lawful or unlawful in such a necessity, although his own opinion indeed declines from it. Bonaventure denies that for the temporal good of another I may willingly offer my life, but he grounds it on the same reason that Augustine does, that we may not love another more than ourselves, which in this case we seem to be doing.

But many of the Fathers such as Jerome, Ambrose, and Lactantius, and many scholastics such as Aquinas, Francisco de Vitoria, Soto, Banez, and infinite others are against him. They answer Saint Augustine that in this case a man does not prefer his friend over himself, but he prefers acts of virtue and of friendship, as things of a more spiritual nature, over his own temporal life.

That for the spiritual good of another a man should expose his own life is an unresisted doctrine. Sayer says, "It is under precept." Thus a curate is bound to baptize and to anoint in the time of a plague. Yes, it is an act of

virtue, though not of necessity, as in the curate's case, "To visit a sick man in such a time, although you are a private man and your aim is not spiritual comfort," says Sa.

We may proceed even further, for we may lawfully dispossess ourselves of that which has been afforded us and without which we can have no hope of sustaining our lives. In a persecution, for example, a private man, having food sufficient only to sustain one man, may give it to a public person and so perish. Only Soto denies that in a shipwreck, after we have both been in equal danger, if I catch a fish and get myself something to sustain me, I may give this to my father or to a magistrate. Here Soto stands against the force of Navarrus, Toledo, Francisco de Vitoria, and many others.

The farthest and uttermost degree of this desertion is inordinate, indiscreet, voluntary fasting. As it is written into the canons, Saint Jerome says, "By such an immoderate innocence and indiscreet singing of psalms and offices a man loses his dignity and incurs the reputation of madness." About this writing Navarrus says that Saint Jerome pronounces "Indiscreet fasting that shortens the life" to be self-homicide "if the party perceives that it works that effect, even if it is done without any intention to shorten his life and done in order to be better able to satisfy God." Speaking of the same intention, he adds in another place, "It makes no difference whether you are long in killing yourself or do it at once."

Cassian expressly says, "That friar killed himself who, having vowed in his journey to eat nothing unless God himself gave him meat, refused to eat when thieves who customarily killed travelers at that place came and presented him bread." Although he says he killed himself, he nevertheless imputes to him nothing but indiscretion.

Therefore, Bosquier says, "Our savior Christ did not exceed forty days in his fast so he would not seem a self-homicide." He interprets the words, "He hungered," to mean, "Then he perceived his body to languish and suffer detriment by fasting." For, if he had not hungered until then, his fasting would have had no virtue, so that he gave in when he found the state of his body impaired by fasting, still pursuing and imitating the superstition of the philosophers who taught that "While we strengthen the body, we are being made more mortal," and that "By attenuation we are made like God." How much the writers in the Roman Church allow and obliquely exhort these inordinate fasts and other disciplines appears from what I cited above from Scribanius—indeed, wherever they have occasion to speak of this

matter. On that topic more than any other do they so often inculcate, “It was the practice of the devil to appear to Saint Francis and cry out to him that no man who kills himself with such maceration could be saved,” which Bonaventure relates in his life of Francis.

They teach that we ought to outdo whatever others have done. They say, “The monks in Prester John’s dominions fast strictly for fifty days, standing all the while in water up to the chin.” They find in the chronicles of Konrad of Lichtenau, abbot of Ursperg, the story of a maid who fasted two years and a half after she had received [in communion] the body of our blessed savior. They say a desert monk fasted twenty-two years without eating or drinking anything. They say no fast can be too severe that is undertaken to reduce our body to tameness. Indeed Sayer says, “Although that tameness is already perfectly accomplished, still a man is bound to the fasts that are enjoined.” Aquinas says, “Fasting, even without charity, washes away sin.”

By this rigor of fasting they seem sure that our savior stayed awake all those forty days (Matt. 4:2, Mark 1:13, Luke 4:2), because, says Bosquier, “He who takes bed takes breakfast.” But since it is unlikely that Moses slept in his forty days of conversation with God (Exod. 24:18), it is also unlikely that Christ did any less than he. Saint Francis is extolled by them for observing three Lents every year—just what Saint Jerome so detested in the Montanists—and, although their aims were different, still this shows that to some aims these enormous witherings of our bodies are allowable. For that reason John the Baptist’s austerity (Matt. 3:4) is so much dignified, and Saint Peter’s feeding on lupines, and Saint Matthew’s living without meat. The Emperor Justinian “In an extreme sickness during Lent would take nothing but herbs, salt, and water.” According to the Carthusian rule, even though it appears that meat would save the patient’s life, he may not eat it. According to the Apostolic Constitutions, which Torres extols so much that by them he refuses much of the Beformed Church’s doctrine, “A man must fast to death rather than receive any meat from an excommunicated person.” In another chapter, “In a case of extreme necessity if anything is accepted from such a person, it may be bestowed in full, so that their alms may be burned and consumed to ashes—but not meat with which to nourish ourselves.”

To end this section on desertion: since we may waive our defense that the law gives by leaving our case to a jury; since nature allows us to repel force with force; since I may without fleeing (or eating when I have the

means) turn myself over to an executioner or a famine; since I *may* offer my life, even for another's temporal good, which I *must* do for his spiritual good; since I may give another my board in a shipwreck and so drown; since I may hasten my arrival in heaven by consuming penances; since all that is the case, it is a wayward and ignoble stubbornness in argument to say I must not kill myself but I may let myself die. As to affirmations and denials, of omissions and commissions, of injunctions and prohibitory commands, always the one implies and enwraps the other. If the matter can be resolved and governed only by an outward *act* and always by that, then if I forbear to swim in a river and so perish, because there is no act, I shall not be guilty. But I shall be guilty if I discharge at myself a pistol that I did not know was loaded and intended no harm, because there is an *act.*

Mariana the Jesuit seems to be of this latter opinion, as we shall have occasion to note in the next member and species of homicide, which is abstinence.

6. Before we come to that topic, we must consider another species of homicide, which is mutilation or maiming—although it neither is nor naturally could be included in Toledo's division.

In civil courts self-maiming is not subject to the same penalty as self-homicide. But if it is accompanied by the same malignity it is in conscience the same sin, especially towards ourselves, because it violates the same reason, that nobody may encroach upon the body over which he has no dominion.

For that reason it is also unlawful for us to deliver ourselves into bondage—which I mention here because it arises from the same ground, and I am loath to accord it a particular section. Yet the holy Paulinus, a confessor and bishop of Nola, than whom I find no man celebrated with more fame of sanctity and integrity, in order to redeem a widow's son delivered himself as a slave to the Vandals and was exported from Italy to Africa—when as a bishop he was needed in his place, I think, for it happened only five years before his death.

To return to mutilation, it is clear from the canons that with reference to illegality it counts as much and goes as far to have maimed as to have killed. A council at London in 1075 passed a canon that forbids a clergyman to be present at a judgment of death or of mutilation. Among the Apostolic Canons is this one, "He who castrates himself cannot be a clergyman because he is a homicide of himself and an enemy to God's creature." In

our law, “To castrate is to maim.” In the next canon it is said, “A clergyman who castrates himself must be deposed because he is a self-homicide. For that fault a layman must be excommunicated for three years, because he betrays his own life.” Castration was therefore counted equivalent to killing. Calvin counted it so heinous that he built his argument against divorce on this ground, “God made them one body, and in no case is it lawful for a man to tear his own body.” But if castration is as lawful as divorces are lawful, certainly the peremptory sentence against it must admit of some modification!

There are, of course, examples of holy men who have maimed themselves to disable themselves from taking on the burden of priesthood. One was Saint Mark the Evangelist, who to that end cut off his thumb.

Also, since our savior said, “Many should castrate themselves for the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 19:12), Athenagoras fifty [actually, 150] years after Christ says that many did it. Apart from these examples, nobody doubts what Sayer says, “That a man unjustly detained to a sure execution may cut off the limb by which he is tied, if he has no other way to escape; or, being surrounded by dogs, he may cut off a hand and cast it to them in order to distract them while he escapes.”

7. The last species of homicide in Toledo’s argument is this: the last act is an actual helping and concurrence to it. Every step and degree conducing purposely to that end is by judges of conscience justly called homicide. So Arduino, reckoning up all poisons that have a natural malignity and tendency to destroy man’s body, does not exclude a flea, although it never kills, because it tries to do so and does all the damage it can. He is diligent in assigning preservatives and restoratives against the flea.

Upon the Amalekite who told David he helped Saul die when he found him too weak to stab himself, David pronounced a judgment of death, for, he says, “Your own mouth has confessed that you have killed the Lord’s anointed” (II Sam. 1:16). Mariana the Jesuit, whom I have cited above, reckons this actual concurring in one’s own death as heavy as the act itself —as it seems, even though the party does not know it. After he decided how a heretical king might be poisoned, he was diligent in this prescription, “The king must not be constrained to take the poison himself, but some other way administer it to him. Therefore, it should be prepared and conveyed in some way other than meat or drink, because otherwise, either

willingly or ignorantly, the king would kill himself." Thus he provides that the king who must die under the sins of tyranny and heresy must still be defended from concurring in his own death, even ignorantly, as though this were a greater sin.

Since, on this reading, the hastening of our death by such an act is the same as complete self-homicide, let us consider how far unreproved custom, example, and law either allow it or command it. That it is allowable seems to me somewhat proved in that "Before any man accuses him, a malefactor may go and declare his fault to the judge," according to Soto.

Among Italian narratives, the one in Sansovino concerning England has many marks and impressions of malice. He tells of a custom, which he falsely says is observed here. "Men condemned to be hanged are always accompanied to their executions by all their kindred, who then hang on their feet to hasten their end. Also, when a patient is abandoned by the physicians, his nearest kinsman strangles him with a pillow." The author had this much ground, that ordinarily at executions men, out of charity as they think, do so, and women who despair of sick persons' recovery used to take their pillows from under them and so let them die sooner. Have they any more dominion over these bodies than the persons themselves? Or if a man were able to do these things to himself, might he not do so? Or might he not with a safe conscience put so many weights in his pockets as would accomplish the stretching? I speak only comparatively; might he not do it as well as they?

In my understanding, such an act either by an executioner or a bystander is in no way justifiable, for it is an injury both to the party, whom a sudden pardon might redeem, and to the judge, who has appointed a painful death to deter others from crime. The breaking of the legs of crucified men (John 19:32), which was done to hasten death, was not allowed except by petition. The law might be much defrauded if such violence might be used where the breaking of the halter delivered the prisoner from death, as it does in some places. Good opinions concur that one should always do without doubt whatever makes for easy, or escapes painful, passage out of this life. In such cases a man may do things more allowably by his own act than a stranger may. For the law of nature inclines and excuses him. Others are forbidden by many laws to hasten his death, because they are otherwise interested only as parts of the whole body of the state, and thus it concerns them that justice be executed. We see that this, like the case of withdrawing the

pillows, is ordinarily done and counted a pious deed. The Athenian executions were always by the hand of the offender in judgments of death by poison.

In the law of purgation assigned by God to ease a man on whom the spirit of jealousy had fallen, the woman was to take the water of curses and bitterness, which would make her infamous and make her belly swell and her thighs rot (Num. 5:11-22). Those forms of purgation that were called common ones lasted long, even in the church, for there is nothing extant against them until Steven V in the year 885. Charlemagne, in whom the church acknowledged enough piety, introduced one form more severe than the rest, which was to walk on nine burning harrows.

When a bishop named Brito was extrajudicially calumnied by the people for having gotten his laundress with child, after his innocence had prevailed so far with God that the one-month-old child, being adjured in the name of Christ, exonerated him, Brito did not accept it but chose and performed a kind of purgation by carrying burning coals upon his head. Evidently in England both kinds of trial by ordeal, by water and by fire, lasted until King John's time. Although men were forced to go into the ordeal of boiling water, that was only for the meaner sort, but to carry the three-pound weight of red-hot iron, which was for the purgation of persons of better quality, was an act (as all the foregoing were) in which a man must of necessity do something actually against himself and be the executioner of his own judgment. As long as these forms of purgation—and the other, by battle—were legal, they were lawfully done.

In Saint Dorotheus, who everywhere professed a love of the obedience that he himself called indiscreet, you will read many praises given to men who not only forsook themselves but actually furthered their destruction—although not effectually, which makes no difference, if it is in dangers that men usually do not escape. He praises one friar who, being commanded by his abbot to return one night, when the waters were risen that night committed himself to a raging torrent in such an act of obedience.

Another was bidden by his abbot to go into the town where he suspected he would fall into some temptation by a certain spectacle. He went, but with the protestation that he hoped he was in the protection not of God but of the one who sent him. But the most natural story to our present purpose is this. A hoary old man, seeing his servant mistake poison for honey and put it into his broth, ate it nevertheless and without chiding. When the servant

perceived it and exclaimed, “Sir, I have killed you,” he answered, “It’s all the same, for if God would have had me eat honey he would have directed your hand to the honey.” We have sufficient testimony to the holiness of Joseph of Arimathaea who, being sent by the apostles to preach the gospel, among other persecutions was constrained to drink poison, which necessarily involved the act that we now discuss. How much did Saint Andrew contribute to his own crucifixion? How much did Saint Lawrence contribute to his own broiling when he called to the tyrant, “This side is done; turn the other, and then eat”? “Great men make precepts by their deeds,” says Quintilian. These acts of men who otherwise are counted holy may always be good warrants and examples to us, when the cause is not prejudged by any greater authority such as scripture or councils, nor that very act accused by any author.

But to stay no longer with examples, among casuists I observe that the greater number denies that it is lawful for a condemned man to do the last, immediate act that leads to his death, such as the drinking of poison, but they agree that he may do the acts that are somewhat more removed.

Francisco de Vitoria defines even this act of drinking poison as lawful. Thus among them it is not clear whether or not a man may do it. Indeed, in very many cases it is not only lawful to do as much without any condemnation, but also it is necessary, and by their rules sinful, to omit it. Curates must go into infected houses to administer the sacraments. If a priest enters a woods where three wait to kill him, and one of them, repenting of that purpose, meets him and under the seal of confession discloses the fault, the priest is bound to go forward to a certain death in the woods rather than by returning let the others know that he learned in confession of their plan. So peremptory is their doctrine, whatever be their practice, against revealing confessions. Although this may perhaps seem a wanton case, framed on impossible happenings, as Soto counts it, the reason may have this use: that although self-preservation is divine natural law and the seal of confession is only divine positive law, still, because the circumstances are not the same, in this case a public good must be preserved above his private life. Thus we may do some acts ourselves that probably—even certainly, as far as human knowledge goes—lead to our destruction, which is the nearest step to the last act of doing it entirely ourselves.

8. We spoke of this last act of self-homicide while considering the law of nature and must speak of it again when we come to understand those texts in scripture that seem to aim towards it. Before we conclude this part about the law of reason, we may aptly present such deductions, comparisons, and consequences as may reasonably seem to annihilate or diminish this fault. Because most will be grounded either in the conscience of the doer or in the church's opinion of the deed when it is done, we will consider how far an erring conscience may justify any act. Then we will produce some examples of persons guilty of this who were nevertheless canonized by the church's admitting them into the martyrology and assigning them their feasts, offices, vigils, and such religious celebrations. We need make no use of the example of Pythagoras, who rather than offend his philosophical conscience either by treading on the beans himself or by suffering his scholars to speak before their time, delivered up himself and forty of his scholars to his enemy's sword.

To avoid the deceitful ambiguities and multiform entanglings of the scholastics, we will follow what is delivered for the common opinion. A conscience that errs justly, probably, and in good faith—that is, after all moral industry and diligence have been used (I do not mean exquisite diligence but such as is proportionate to the person and his quality and to the knowledge that that man is bound to have of that thing at that time)—is bound to act according to the misinformation and the mis- persuasion thus contracted. Moreover, with a conscience that errs negligently or otherwise viciously and in bad faith, as long as the error remains and resides in the conscience, a man is bound *not* to act against his conscience. In the first case, if one thinks in his conscience that he ought to lie to save an innocent person or that he ought to steal to save a famished man, he is a homicide if he does not lie or steal. In the second case, although he is not bound to any act, it is lawful for him to admit anything otherwise necessary.

This obligation that our conscience lays upon us is of stronger hold and of narrower band than the precept of any superior, whether a law or a person, and is so much of natural right that it cannot be infringed or altered by the benefit of divine indulgence, to use their own words. As that doctrine is to be gathered everywhere among the casuists, so it is well collected, amassed, argued, and confirmed, especially by Azorius.

If a man, after convenient and requisite diligence, despoiled of all human affection and self-interest and "Burning with the holy fire of good

impatience," as Paulinus says, in conscience believes that he is invited by the spirit of God to do what Jonah, Abraham, and perhaps Samson did, who according to these rules can condemn this to be sin?

Thus I suspect there was some haste and precipitousness in the judgment of Cassian, otherwise a just esteemer and valuer of works of devotion and obedience, who pronounces the apparition of an angel to Heron the desert monk, who after fifty years was so intense and earnest in attending God's service and in religious negligence of himself that he would hardly omit Easter Day from his strict fasting, and being now full of the awareness of victories (so the panegyric says)—Cassian calls the apparition an illusion of the devil to make Heron destroy himself. Yet Heron, being drawn out of the well into which he had cast himself and living three days afterwards, persisted in a devout acknowledgment that it was the spirit of God that solicited him to do it. Heron died in such constant assurance and alacrity that Paphnutius the abbot, although at first in some suspense, did not number him among the self-homicides, who were persons reputed to have viciously killed themselves.

Nor may it necessarily be concluded that this act was therefore evil if it appeared to be from the devil. For Wier tells us of a maid whom the devil persuaded to go on a certain pilgrimage and at a certain altar to hear a mass for the recovery of her health. Surely if, as Vazquez holds, "It is not idolatry to worship the devil in an apparition if I think it is God," it can be no offense to believe him, after I have used all means to discern and distinguish! Those rules that are delivered ordinarily by which to know the devil are apparently false—a difference in his hands or feet, or some notable deformity of horns or a tail, of which Binsfeld seems confident of the first and Menghi of the second.

Even the rule that God always infuses or commands good things, if it is understood to apply to what is good in the common and natural course of events, is not always safe, for it did not hold in Abraham's case nor in that of the Israelites. Vazquez's first excuse, that such worship is not idolatry because by reason of our immediate relation to God we never arrest nor stop the devil by the way, will do no good in our case of believing. But his other excuse will help which he has in the same place; namely, that there may be an invincible ignorance, and that in such ignorance any exterior act whatever that proceeds from a sincere and pure intention of the mind is an act of true religion. More safely than the panegyric could say to

Constantine, “His own wisdom is his deity,” may we say of every man’s conscience that is thus rectified.

Therefore, if they will still turn in their circle and say, God concurs in no evil, we say nothing is so evil but that it becomes good if God commands it. Moreover, self-homicide is not so naturally evil that it requires a special commission from God. Just as it becomes good if he commands it, so it becomes neutral if he removes the reasons conditioning the precept against it.

If they return to Saint Augustine’s two reasons against Donatus—the first was, “We have authority to save your body against your will,” and the second was, “None of the faithful ever did this act”—we are thereby hastened to the other consideration, how those who have done it have been esteemed by the Catholic Church.

A little needs to be said in passing about Saint Augustine’s second reason. The first has very little force since, although it may be lawful to preserve a man who is willing to die, it is not always meritorious or obligatory to do so. Thus Ignatius so earnestly exhorted the Romans not to try to preserve him. Also, the civic crown, which was given to any who had rescued a citizen in the wars, was not given, even if he produced witnesses of the deed, unless the person so rescued confessed that he benefited thereby. In the second reason, why does Saint Augustine refer Donatus to examples? For if Donatus had produced any (as from credible and authentic stories he might have produced very many, and out of the scriptures that in Saint Augustine’s opinion were canonical he might have alleged the examples of Eleazar and Razis), Saint Augustine was always provided with the refuge that it was special inspiration and not to be followed or imitated.

Had it been a good argument in Rome for 500 years that divorce was not lawful, because there was no example of it?—or for almost 2,000 years that a woman might not sue for divorce against her husband, because before Herod’s daughter there was no example of it? But when the church has persevered so long not only in justifying but also in solemnizing many examples of self-homicide, are not Saint Augustine’s disciples guilty of the same pertinacity that is imputed to Aristotle’s followers who, defending the heavens to be unalterable because in so many ages nothing had been observed to have been altered, his scholars still stubbornly maintain his proposition, although by many experiences of new stars (according to Kepler) the reason that moved Aristotle now seems to be utterly defeated?

Having spoken this much about Saint Augustine and having purposely postponed the examples recorded in the scriptures for our third part, we will consider some examples registered in ecclesiastical history.

The church—whose dignity and constancy it well becomes that the rule of its own law always be justly said of itself, “What once was acceptable cannot later be unacceptable,” unless new reasons interpose— celebrates on February 9 the birth (that is, the death) of the virgin and martyr Apollonia. After the persecutors had beaten out her teeth and vexed her with many other tortures, she was led to the fire. Being inflamed with a more burning fire of the Holy Ghost, she broke from the officer’s grasp and leaped into the fire. For this act of hers many advocates take up her case and say that either the story is not certain (although the sources are Bede, Usuard, Ado, and, as Baronius says, others of the Latins), or else, says Sayer, you must answer that she was brought very near the fire and as good as thrown in, or else that she was provoked to do it by divine inspiration. Unless it was another divine inspiration—true charity—that moved the beholders back then to believe and the church ever since to acknowledge that she thus did a noble and Christian act to the special glory of God, this act of hers as well as of any others might have been calumnied to have been done out of weariness of life, or fear of relapsing, or haste to reach heaven, or the ambition of martyrdom.

The memory of Pelagia as a virgin and martyr is celebrated on June 9. To be sure, the history of this woman suffers some perplexity and gives occasion to doubt its truth. Ambrose says that she and her mother drowned themselves, and Chrysostom says that they flung themselves down from a house-top. And Baronius finds this knot so hard to disentangle that he says, “There is nothing we say to this.” Nevertheless, the church, as I said, celebrates her act as though it were glad to take any occasion of approving such courage in such a cause, which was only preservation of chastity. “Their martyrdom,” says Saint Augustine, “was always in the Catholic Church frequented by the utmost veneration.”

Saint Ambrose, when his sister Marcellina consulted him directly on what might be thought of those who kill themselves in such cases (and it is agreed by all that the opinions of the Fathers are to be especially valued when they speak of a matter not incidentally or casually but directly and deliberately), answered, “We have an example of such a martyrdom in Pelagia.” Then he presented to his sister this religious meditation, “Let us

die if we may have leave or if we are denied leave, yet let us die. God cannot be offended with this when we use it only for a remedy and our faith takes away all offense. Here is no difficulty, for who is willing to die and cannot, since there are so many ways to death? I will not trust my hand lest it fail to strike home nor my breast lest it withdraw itself. I will leave no escape to my flesh, for we can die with our own weapons and without the benefit of an executioner." [Donne's paraphrase of Ambrose's account of Pelagia is continued in quotation marks.] "Then, having dressed herself as a bride and going into the water, she says, 'Here let us be baptized. This is the baptism where sins are forgiven and where a kingdom is purchased, and this is a baptism after which none sins. This water regenerates, this makes us virgins, this opens heavens, defends the feeble, delivers from death, and makes us martyrs. Only we pray to God that this water not scatter us but reserve us to one funeral.' Then they entered as in a dance, hand in hand, where the torrent was deepest and most violent. Thus they died, as their mother upon the bank called them 'These prelates of virginity, captains of chastity, and companions in martyrdom.'"

Before Ambrose we find that Eusebius was of the same persuasion.

He has the mother encouraging them by saying, '"You know how I have brought you up in the fear of God; and shall your nakedness, which the public air has not had permission to see, now be prostituted in the pools? Do not have so little faith in God that you fear death. Do not despise chastity so much that you live with shame, but with a pure and chaste death condemn this world.' And so, deluding their keepers as though they withdrew for natural necessities, they drowned themselves."

All authors of that time are so profuse in their praise of this deed that it is just to say of it what Pliny says of Nerva's adopting Trajan: "It was impossible that it should have pleased all when it was done, unless it had pleased all before it was done." For no author that I have lighted upon diminished the glory of these and others like them until Saint Augustine, out of his most zealous and fearful tenderness of conscience, began to seek out some ways how these self-homicides might be justified, because he suspected that this act was naturally exempt from blame. Even so, he always brings himself to such perplexity that either he must defend it and call into question the authority of a general consonance of all times and authors, or else retreat to that poor and improbable defense that it was done by divine inspiration. That can hardly be admitted in this case, where it was

not their religion but only their chastity that was solicited and attacked. Nor can Saint Ambrose or Eusebius be brought to that opinion of special divine inspiration, because, speaking sincerely, even if in the mother's person, they incite them to it with reasons drawn from moral virtues.

Still, Saint Augustine's example, as it prevails very much and very justly for the most part, has drawn many others since him to the same interpretation of the same acts. When the kingdom of Naples came to be divided between Ferdinand V and Louis XII, the French army being admitted into Capua on the condition that it do no violence, among many outrages a virgin, unable to escape the fury of a licentious soldier, offered as a ransom to lead him to treasure, and so took advantage of a place in the wall to fling herself into the river. "This act," says Pedraza, "we must believe to be done by divine inspiration, because God loves chastity now as well as he ever did." Every side may find this escape easy if, being pressed with reasons, they may say as Peter Martyr does of the Egyptian midwives (Exod. 1:15-20) and Rahab (Joshua 2:1-7) and others, "If they lied, they did it on an impulse from God."

But as our custom has been, let us leave examples for rules—even though a concurrence of examples and either an express or interpretive approbation of them (much more a dignifying of them such as this) by the whole church and Catholic authors approved by that church is equivalent to a rule. To ease the reader and to continue my first resolution of not descending into many particulars, I will present only one rule. But it is so pregnant that from it may be derived many by which not only a man may but must do the whole and entire act of killing himself—which is to preserve the seal of confession. For although the rule in general is, "If a spider fall into the chalice, the wine may be changed, because nothing abominable ought to be taken on the occasion of this sacrament," so it may be, if the priest after consecration comes into the knowledge that the wine is poisoned, "lest the chalice of life be turned into death." But if he knows this by confession from his assistant or anybody else and cannot by any diversion or disguise keep from disclosing that this was confessed to him except by drinking it, even if it is poison he must drink it.

Because men of more abundant reading, active discourse, and conclusive judgment will easily provide themselves with more reasons and examples to this purpose, it will satisfy me to have awakened them this much and shown

them a mark to direct their meditations upon. So I may proceed to the third part, which is the law of God.

THE THIRD PART: OF THE LAW OF GOD

Distinction I

1. The light that issues from the moon best represents and expresses what we call in ourselves the light of nature. As that in the moon is permanent and always there, and yet unequal, various, pale, and languishing, so is our light of nature changeable. At the outset shining at full light, it soon waned and, through our departing farther and farther from God, declined on account of general sin to almost a total eclipse. God, later coming nearer to us first through the law and then through grace, enlightened and repaired it again, conveniently to his ends, for the further exercise of his mercy and justice. Then there are those artificial lights that we ourselves make for our use and service here, such as fires, tapers, and so forth. They resemble the light of reason, as we interpreted that term in our second part.

Although the light of these fires and tapers is not as natural as the moon's, still, because they are more domestic and obedient to us, we distinguish particular objects better by them than by the moon. So by the arguments, deductions, and conclusions that we ourselves beget and produce, being more serviceable and subordinate because they are our creatures, particular cases are made more clear and evident to us. With these we can be bold, put them to any use, examine and prove their truth or likelihood, and make them answer as long as we ask. But the light of nature, with a solemn and arrogant majesty, will speak only once and neither give a reason nor endure examination. Of these two kinds of light the first is too weak and the other false, for color is only the object of sight, and we do not trust candlelight to discern colors.

We therefore have the sun, the fountain and treasure of all created light, for an emblem of that third kind and best light of our understanding, which is the word of God. "The commandment is a lamp and the law a light" (Prov. 6:23), says Solomon. But since weak, credulous men sometimes think they see two or three suns when they see nothing but meteors or other appearances, so many men are transported with similar facility or dazzling. For some of their opinions they think they have the light and authority of scripture, when (God knows) truth, the light of divine scriptures, against their viewpoint, is removed to the farthest possible distance.

They take any small text of scripture that mistakenly appears to them to be of use in justifying any opinion of theirs. Then, since the word of God has that precious nature of gold so that a little quantity by reason of faithful tenacity and malleability can be made to cover 10,000 times as much as any other metal, they extend that small text so far, and labor and beat it to such a thinness that it is hardly any longer the word of God. They do so simply to give their reasons a little tincture and color of gold, even though they have lost all its weight and value.

But since the scripture itself teaches that "No prophecy in the scripture is of private interpretation" (II Peter 1:20), the whole church is not bound and enclosed by the fancy of any one (or of a few) who, being content to put themselves to sleep with any opinion and lazy prejudice, dream up arguments to establish and authorize it.

A professed interpreter of dreams, Artemidorus, tells us that "No dream of a private man may be interpreted to signify public business." This I say, because of all the texts in scripture that are alleged for the doctrine that we now examine hardly one, except the precept, "You shall not kill" (Exod. 20:13), is offered by any two authors. Rather, to one one text, and to another another text, seems directly to govern in the point. To me, to allow truth her natural and comely boldness, *no* texts govern except those that seem to look towards self-homicide.

In going over all the sentences that I have gathered from many authors and in presenting helpful answers to and interpretations of them, I shall forbear the names of the authors who produced them so impertinently, lest I seem to reveal their nakedness or even to accuse them of prevarication. If any divine thinks the cause or persons are injured herein and counts me worthy of being led back to the other opinion, with the same charity that provoked me and that (I thank God) has accompanied me from the beginning, I beseech him to take so much advantage from me and my instruction that he will do it without bitterness. He will better see the way, better show it, and better sail through it if he raises no storms.

May such men also, since they are "Fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19), hunt us into their nets for our own good. But perhaps there is some mystical interpretation belonging to the canon that allows clergymen to hunt. They may do it by nets and snares but not by dogs, for clamor and bitings are forbidden them. I have been sorry to see that even Beza himself, writing against an adversary and a cause equally and extremely obnoxious, simply

by allowing his zeal too much fuel raged against the man and, neglecting or only forbidding the cause, has given answer to Ochino's book on polygamy with less thoroughness and satisfaction than either becomes his learning and watchfulness or befits his use and custom.

Distinction II

1.—In all the judicial and the ceremonial law put forth by Moses, who was more particular in his laws than any others, there is no abomination, indeed no mention, of self-homicide. He teaches what we shall and shall not eat, wear, and speak, yet he says nothing against this.

2.—The first text that I find offered against us is Genesis 9:5-6, "I will require your lifeblood; at the hand of every beast I will require it and at the hand of man; even at the hand of a man's brother will I require the life of man; whoever sheds a man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

Lavater, a very learned man of the Reformed Church, says that the Jews understand this text to imply self-homicide. But shall we put ourselves under the Jews' yoke, asks Buxtorf, so that "If we find in the rabbis things contrary to nature we must dare to accuse nothing but our own weakness, because their word is God's word, and if they contradict one another, still both are from God"? Nicholas of Lyra, who seldom departs from the Jews in matters not controverted between them and us, mentions no such exposition, yet he expounds the text in more than one way and with enough liberty and straying afar. Manoel de Sa, who in his notes is more curious and superstitious in restoring all the Hebraisms and oftentimes their interpretations than perhaps the Jews would desire at his hands, offers no other sense than what the words present. Nor can self-homicide fall within the threat and punishment of that law, for how can the magistrate shed the blood of one who has killed himself?

3.—The next is Deuteronomy 32:39, "I kill, and I give life," from which it is concluded that all authority over life and death is from God and none is in ourselves. But shall we dare to condemn utterly all those states and governments in which fathers, husbands, and masters had jurisdiction over children's, wives', and servants' lives? If we dare, how shall we defend any magistracy, if this text is so strictly interpreted? Or, if it admits exceptions, why may not our case be included among them?

However, that this text is incongruously brought to bear on the topic appears from the words that follow it, “There is none that can deliver out of my hand.” Moreover, since this is a verse of the divine poem that God himself made and delivered to Moses as a stronger and more slippery insinuation and impression into the Israelites’ hearts than the language of any law would make, it only expresses that the mercies and judgments of God are safe and removed from any human hindrance or interruption. Similarly, in another song of thanks made by Samuel’s mother the same words are repeated, “The lord kills and makes alive” (I Sam. 2:6); this is because God had given her a son when she was past hoping for one. That text also in Tobit 13:12 is fitly paralleled with this one, “He leads to hell and brings up, nor is there any who can avoid his hand” (Tobit 13:2). Can these two texts be twisted from their purpose to mean that none but God may have jurisdiction over our temporal life? Also, the text from Wisdom 16:13 that is always joined to this issue signifies the same as these, “For you have the power of life and death,” which is spoken of his miraculous curing by the brazen serpent. All four of these texts have one concern and aim, and none of them looks toward our question.

4.—In the order of the divine books, the next text produced is Job 7:1, “The life of man upon earth is military service.” Although our translation makes it out to say, “Is there not a time appointed to man upon earth?” the Latin text is cited to this purpose by some who are not addicted to the Vulgate edition, because in Latin it seems better to afford an argument against self-homicide. From it they infer that we may not depart at our own pleasure from the battle. But because only the metaphor and neither the extending of it nor the inference from it is taken from the scripture, it carries with it no strong obligation.

Nor does it deserve much earnestness by way of answer. Still, to follow up the allusion a bit, “A soldier may by law be ignorant of the law and is not much accusable if he transgresses it.” According to another law, if “A soldier whose presence is necessary for the security of the army is absent by virtue of a public cause, his absence shall be interpreted to be so.” Even toward those who killed themselves in the army the laws were not severe, as we noted in the second part, if they had any color of just cause. Therefore, this figurative argument profits nothing, especially since it is taken from the text where the intent of Job was to prove that our felicity and the end toward which our actions are bent is not in this life. Rather, just as wars

work toward peace so we labor here toward death, toward the happiness we shall have hereafter. Thus, whoever was the author of the letter to Abgar bearing Christ's name does not make Christ say that when he has done that for which he was sent here he will come to Abgar and take his offer of half his kingdom, but that when he has done his work he will return to him who sent him; that is, he will die. Therefore, if either side of the issue has advantage from this text of Job, we have it.

5.—Much more does our side have advantage from the other text from Job 7:15, "Therefore my soul chooses rather to be strangled and to die than to be in my bones." From this they infer that if it had been lawful to die, Job would have done it. Apart from the wretched poverty and feebleness of this kind of negative argument, since Job did not do it he was not allowed to do it, we may perceive from the whole frame of the story that God had chosen him for another use, as an example of extreme patience. Whatever appears in Job's case, he might not lawfully do it because he could intend nothing but his own ease. Still Job, whose sanctity I think it a sacrilege to diminish (whether he was a real or a fictional person), by their confession strayed so far towards killing himself as to wish his death and to curse his birth, for the whole third chapter is a bitter and malignant invective against his life and a violent wishing for his own death.

Sextus Senensis gives so literal an answer that it makes no sense, "In cursing his birthday, which then was past, he cursed nothing." Saint Gregory the Great gives so mystical an answer that it makes no sense, "There is a second birth into sin in this world, and Job cursed his entrance into that birth." Since these words might readily be taken for an inordinate wishing for death, Gregory provides them also with a mystical interpretation. For the Latin reading, *suspendium eligit anima mea* (my soul chooses hanging), he says, "This was a spiritual hanging, which was only an elevation of the mind, as Saint Paul said, 'With Christ I have been crucified on the cross'"(Gal. 2:20).

Beyond the fact that this escape will not do when the original words are considered, the very next verse is, "I loathe my life; fruitlessly do I live on" (Job 7:16). In the twentieth verse [actually, Job 7:19] he chides God by the name of "O, you preserver of men" as being angry that he preserved him, "Being now a burden to himself, and would not leave him alone while he might swallow his spittle." He ends the chapter thus, "If you seek for me in the morning, I shall not be found" (Job 7:21). I say this only to show that

one whom nobody has exceeded in holiness may, without any twisting of his words, be argued to have stepped far toward a purpose of killing himself. Whoever wishes to give any other construction to his words will not displease me, but he will not impair the strength of our proposition.

I confess that I have not read anybody who expounds these words of Job this directly, and I know that the general opinion about his despairing held by the Anabaptists is much discredited. Apart from all that, it is neither just nor ingenuous to condemn everything that a condemned man says, for even a leprous man may have one clean hand with which to give and take. Saint Jerome is inexcusable for his slippery zeal in his behavior toward Vigilantius. The Council of Trent itself is obnoxious for condemning the names of authors instead of their books. Moreover, the Anabaptists differ from me in their aim and purpose, for they impute despair to Job only to discredit the authority of the book, which they schismatically labor to tear from the canon of scripture. With the consent of all Christian churches admitting the book to the canon, I justly say that Job might keep his sanctity and the book its dignity, and still he might have intended to kill himself. Very many reverend authors in the Reformed Church who are not rashly to be dismissed have imputed to our most blessed savior as near approaches to a more dangerous kind of despair than we impute to Job, without putting down him or his scriptures.

6. I find also another text, Job 2:4, thrust forth, “Skin for skin, and all that ever a man has he will give for life.” From these words they argue a natural love in us for this life.

Let it be true (although the devil says it, for the words are his) that our sensitive nature is too indulgent towards this life. I fear I have offended and surfeited you in the first part with examples of merely natural and sensitive men who have chosen death. Still, will that prove that our reasonable nature may in no case correct the enormity? This is as strong against God’s outwardly calling us to him by sickness or persecution as it is against any such inward motions.

7.—As improperly and unprofitably to their ends and purpose they offer the text from Ecclesiasticus 30:16, “There is no wealth above the wealth of physical health.” I place it here, although out of order, because of the affinity between this text and the last one, and since one answer is at least enough for both. While this text may prove that we naturally love this body —the text is not about the safety of the body, as if all men desired that the

body might live, but about bodily health while it does live—still it does not prove that we may in no case abandon it.

8.—The most proper and direct and the strongest text, for it is of moral law, is the commandment, “You shall not kill” (Exod. 20:13). This text is cited by all to this purpose.

I must be allowed to depart here from the opinion of Saint Augustine, who thinks that this commandment is more earnestly bent upon a man’s own self than upon another, because here there is no addition, as there is in the other, “Against your neighbor” (Exod. 20:16). Certainly I am as much forbidden by the commandment falsely to accuse myself as my neighbor, although he alone is named in it. By this one I am as much forbidden to kill my neighbor as myself, although nobody is named. What holds within the compass of the commandment may also hold within the exceptions to it. Although the words are general, “You shall not kill,” we may kill beasts. Magistrates may kill men. A private man in a just war may not only kill, contrary to the sound of this commandment, but he may kill his father, contrary to another one!

When two natural laws contrary to one another occur, we are bound to the one that is of the stricter bind. All laws concerning the honor of God and faith also concern, by virtue of charity, the Second Table of commandments, which is directed toward our neighbor. If, therefore, there could be a necessity that I must do an act of idolatry or kill, I would be bound by the latter commandment and commit idolatry.

If perchance a public, exemplary person, who had a just assurance that his example would govern the people, should be forced by a tyrant to do an act of idolatry (even if under the circumstance he could satisfy his own conscience that he did not sin in doing it) and so scandalize and endanger the people, if the matter were so carried out and disguised that in no way he could let them know that he did it under constraint and not voluntarily, I say by this rule that perhaps he had better kill himself.

A safe rule of Ennenckel’s is, “It is not possible to modify divine law unless the modification itself agrees with divine law.” But since it is not thought by Navarrus a violation of that rule, “To kill by public authority, or in a just war, or in defense of one’s life or of another’s,” why may not our case be as safe and innocent? If anyone importunes me to show the privilege or exemption of this case from the commandment, I may with

Soto hurl it back and call for their privilege to kill a day-thief or any man in defense of another.

As these laws may be logically deduced from the conformity of other laws and from a general authority that God has afforded to all sovereigns to provide as necessities arise, so may our case be derived as well from the necessary obligation that always lies upon us of preferring God's glory over all human concerns. We cannot be put upon to show or to plead any exemption unless, when such a case arises, we say that the case never was within reach of that law. The same is true of all the other things that we heretofore called exemptions. Whatever might have been done prior to the law (as this might, if it is against neither nature nor justice, from both of which we claim to have acquitted it), this commandment never fell upon that or extended to it.

9. I have also found a text urged from Wisdom 1:12, "Seek not death in the error of your life." It is always coupled with a text from Deuteronomy 4:24, so that by collating the two it appears that what is forbidden there is idolatry and by death is meant the second death of eternal damnation, or the way to it.

So this distinction, which was intended for the texts cited from the books of the Old Testament, shall here end, and to the next we assign those of the New Testament.

Distinction III

1. The first that I have observed in the New Testament is Matthew 4:6, where the devil tempts Christ, "If you are the son of God, cast yourself down." With all expositors I confess that this was a temptation to vainglory and therefore applies to our case. We claim that we work somewhat to the service of God and the advancement of his glory when we allow self-homicide to be done. It is a very slippery passage, and a devout man by the nature of devotion would be more likely to err that way than a worldly man, except that the hand of God is extended to protect such men.

Taken directly, this text will not shake or defy our proposition, for although Christ would neither satisfy the devil nor disclose who he was, when it served his own purposes he did as much as the devil tempted him to do in this text or the other, both in changing the species and nature of water into wine and in exposing himself to certain danger when he walked upon

the waters. Christ neither rejected difficulties nor abstained from miracles when he knew he profited the beholders. I do not say that in any other case than when we are probably and excusably assured that it is to a good end may self-homicide be lawful for us.

2.—The next text is in the Acts of the Apostles 16:28, “The keeper of the prison drew out his sword and would have killed himself, supposing the prisoners to be gone, but Paul cried, ‘Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.’”To this I say that by the same spirit by which Paul, being in the inner prison in the dark, knew what the keeper thought and what he was about to do, he also knew God’s purpose to be glorified in the conversion of the keeper and his family. Therefore, he not only restrained the keeper from his intent, which was inordinate and for his own sake, to escape punishment (in which we still may observe how readily man’s nature inclines him to this remedy), Paul also forbore to take benefit from the miracle by escaping. Although he rescues the keeper, he betrays himself.

Thus Calvin poses to himself this objection to the text, that “Paul, seeing all hope of escape to consist in the death of the keeper, neglected the means of liberty that God offered him, when he restrained the keeper from killing himself”; Calvin answers only that “He had a knowledge and insight into God’s purpose and decree.” Otherwise, if he had not had that understanding (which very few achieve), it seems he ought to have let the keeper proceed, in order to facilitate his means of escaping.

3.—This also infers an answer to another text of Saint Paul, where he rids and discharges himself and his fellow apostles of having taught this doctrine, “That a man might do evil in order that good might come of it” (Rom. 3:8). Consequently it is well and by just inference pronounced that he forbids that doctrine. We also humbly subscribe to the same rule and interpret it just as Saint Paul intended it, of things made evil by nature and not by circumstance. We agree in these things also, when any such circumstance does make them evil, if another contrary circumstance does not preponderate and overrule this one. We take liberty to illumine this point with a larger discourse.

God always makes others his executioners of the evils that seem to us to be evils of punishment, of which death is. The greatest of all these, hardness of heart, although it is spiritual, is not worked immediately by God himself, as his spiritual comforts are, but occasionally and by desertion. In these cases God sometimes employs his angels, sometimes the magistrate, and

sometimes ourselves. Still, all that God does in this life in any of these cases is only medicine, for even the blinding and hardening of the heart are sent to further salvation in some and are inflicted medicinally.

These ministers and instruments of his are our physicians, and we may not refuse any bitterness, not even that which is naturally poison, since we are wholesomely corrected by them. As in the case of cramps, which are contortions of the sinews, or of rigors and stiffness in the muscles, we may bring about in ourselves a fever to thaw them, or we may bring about a burning fever to recondense and retemper our blood, so in all rebellions and disobediences of our flesh we may minister to ourselves such corrections and remedies as the magistrate might, if the deed was perfectly plain. Even though for the prevention beforehand of evil we may perform all the offices of a magistrate upon ourselves, in such secret cases it is debatable whether or not we have the authority to do so afterwards, especially in capital matters. Since at this time we need not affirm precisely that authority, I shall not now examine further the extent of that power.

Rather, I go on to the kind of evil that must necessarily be understood in this text of Paul's, which is what we count as naturally evil. Even in that, the bishops of Rome have exercised their power to give dispensation for bigamy, which according to their doctrine is directly against God's commandment and therefore naturally evil. Nicholas V dispensed a bishop in Germany to consult with witches for the recovery of his health. It would be easy to amass many cases of similar presumption. In like manner the imperial law tolerates usury, prescribing in bad faith, and deceit of the public, and it expressly allows witchcraft—to good purposes. "Conformably to which law," Paracelsus says, "it is all one whether God or the devil cures, just so the patient gets well."

Thus the canons have prescribed certain rules for doing evil—when we are overtaken with perplexities, to choose the least serious case. Saint Gregory gives a natural example: "A man confronting a high wall and forced to leap it would choose the lowest part of the wall." Agreeing with all these, the casuists say that "In extreme necessity I do not sin if I induce a man to lend me money usuriously. The reason is that I incline him to a lesser sin, usury, when otherwise he would be a homicide by virtue of not relieving me."

God himself is said to work evil in us after this fashion, because when our heart is full of evil purposes he governs and disposes us to this evil

rather than to that one. In this case, although the virtue and the evil are ours, still the order is from God, and it is good. Indeed, he positively inclines one to some certain evil in that he infuses into a man some good thoughts by which he, out of his viciousness, takes occasion to think he is better off to do some other sin than the one he intended to do. Since all these laws and practices agree that we sometimes do such evil not only for express and positive good but to avoid greater evil, it all seems to me to be against that doctrine of Saint Paul's.

Whatever any human power may dispense us from we may dispense ourselves from in extreme necessity, in the impossibility of recourse to better counsel, in the case of an erring conscience, and in many such cases, since the canon about two evils leaves it to our natural reason to judge, value, compare, and distinguish which of the two evils will occur. Since, for all of this, it is certain that no such dispensation, either from another or from myself, so alters the nature of the thing that it becomes thereby more or less evil, there appears to me no other safe interpretation but this one, that there is no external act that is naturally evil, and that circumstances condition such acts and give them their nature. In this way scandal can make heinous at a given time something that is not heinous if some person goes out of the room or winks.

The law itself is given us as a light that we might not stumble. We need it, but not to see what is naturally evil, for such evil we see naturally, and it was so even before the law declared it to us. Rather, we need this light to see what would be evil (that is, produce evil effects) if we did it at a certain time and under such and such circumstances.

That law is not itself absolutely good but good to the extent and in such respects that what it forbids is evil. Pico, comparing the law to the firmament (as Moses meant the word) observes that on the second day, when God made the firmament (Gen. 1:6), he did not say that it was good, as he did of every other day's work, but it was not evil; for then, says Pico, it could not have received the sun, for if it had been good it would not have needed it. He reprehends the Manichaeans for saying that the law was evil, while he holds to the text of Ezekiel 20:25 that it was not good.

The evil,.therefore, that is forbidden by Saint Paul in this text is either acts of infidelity that no dispensation can deliver from the reach of the law or else acts that by our nature and reason and by the approbation of nations are counted evil or are declared by law or custom to be evil. Because of

their ordinary evil effects, these cast guiltiness upon the doer ordinarily and for the most part, and always unless his case is exempt and privileged. This consideration moved Chrysostom, whom I cited before, to think a lie and a consent to adultery were not evil in Sarah. The same consideration corrected Saint Augustine's squeamishness so far that he leaves us free to think what we will of that wife's act who to pay her husband's debt sold herself for one night.

If any of these things had once been naturally evil, they could never recover from that sickness. As I intimated before, those things that we call miracles were written in the story of God's purpose as precisely (and were as sure to come to pass as the sun's rising and setting) and as naturally in nature's whole compass, for in *that* book of God nothing is written between the lines. In his eternal register, where he foresees all our acts, he has preserved and defended neutral things from ordinary corruption—of evil purpose, of inexcusable ignorance, of scandal, and similar neutral corruptions. So he is said to have preserved our blessed Virgin from original sin in her conception.

To those who do not studiously distinguish circumstances or do not see the doer's conscience and the testimony of God's spirit, some of those acts of ours may at first taste have some of the brackishness of sin. So it was with Moses' killing of the Egyptians (Exod. 12:12), for which there appears no special calling from God. Because this does not happen often, Saint Paul would not embolden us to do any of those things that are customarily reputed to be evil.

If others are delighted with the more ordinary interpretation of this text, that it speaks of everything we call sin, I will not reject that interpretation, provided they do not make the apostle's rule (although in this text it is not properly and exactly given as a rule) more strict than the moral precepts of the Decalogue itself, in which, as in all rules, there are naturally included and incorporated some exceptions. If they allow exceptions to this one, they are still at the beginning, for the case of self-homicide may itself fall within those exceptions.

Otherwise, the general application of this rule is improper. As from infinite other texts it appears evident from the passage in Bellarmine where he says that by reason of this rule a man may not adorn a church by neglecting a poor neighbor. Still, there are a great many cases in which we may neglect this poor neighbor, and therefore to do so is not naturally evil.

Surely whoever is delighted with such arguments and such an application of this text would not only have called to Lot's attention this rule when (Gen. 19:6-8) he offered his daughters (for there it might have color), but also would have joined with Judas when the woman anointed Christ (Mark 14:3-11, John 12:3-7) and would have told her that although the office that she did was good yet the waste that she first made was evil and against this rule.

4. The same apostle in various other texts uses this phrase, "We are the temples of the Holy Ghost." From this it is argued that to demolish or to deface those temples is an unlawful sacrifice. But we are the temples of God in the same way that we are his images; that is, by his residing in our hearts. Who may doubt that the blessed souls of the departed are still his temples and images? Even among heathens those temples that were consecrated to their gods might be demolished in cases of public good or harm, and still the ground remained sacred.

In the first two texts (II Cor. 6:16 and I Cor. 3:16) there is only an exhortation against polluting our hearts, which are God's temples, with idolatry or other sin. In the other text (I Cor. 6:16) he calls our material body the temple, and he makes it an argument to us that we should flee from fornication, because therein we trespass against our own body. There arises here a double argument, that we may not do injury to our own bodies either as it is our own or as it is God's.

In the first of these he says, "A fornicator sins against his body," for, as he said two verses before, "He makes himself one body with a harlot," and thus he diminishes the dignity of his own person. But is this so in our case? —when he withdraws and purges his body from all corruptions and delivers it from all the pollutions, venom, and malign machinations of his (and God's) adversaries and prepares it by God's inspiration and concurrence for the glory that, without death, cannot be attained!

Is it a lesser dignity that one be the priest of God or the sacrifice of God than that one be the temple of God? Says Paul, "Your body is the temple of God, and you are not your own" (I Cor. 6:19). But Calvin on this point says that you are not your own in that you may live according to your own will or abuse your body with pollutions and uncleanness. Our body is so much our own that we may use it to God's glory, and it is so little our own that when he is pleased to have it we do well in resigning it to him, by whatever officer he accepts it, whether by angel, sickness, persecution, magistrate, or ourselves. Just be careful of this last lesson, in which Paul amasses and

gathers together all his previous doctrine: “Glorify God in your body and in your spirit, for they are his” (I Cor. 6:20).

5. The text in Ephesians 4:15-16, “But let us follow the truth in love and in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is, Christ, until we are all come together into a perfect man,” has some affinity with this one. By this we receive the honor to be one body with Christ our head, which is afterward more expressly declared, “We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone” (Eph. 5:30). Therefore, they say that to withdraw ourselves, who are the limbs of him, is not only homicide of ourselves, who cannot live without him, but a parricide towards him who is our common father.

However, as in fencing passion lays a man as open as unskillfulness, and a troubled desire to hit makes him not only miss but also receive a wound, so he who alleges this text overreaches to his own danger. For only this is taught here: all our growth and vegetation flows from our head, Christ, who has chosen for himself, to perfect his body, limbs proportional to it, and as a soul must live through all the body so it, and as a soul must live through all the body so must this care live and dwell in every part, always ready to do its proper function and also to succor those other parts for whose relief or sustenance it is framed and planted in the body. Thus no literal construction is to be admitted here, as though the body of Christ could be damaged by the removal of any man. As some leaves pass their natural course and season and fall again from the tree, being withered with age, and some fruits are gathered unripe and some ripe, and some branches that fall off in a storm are carried to the fire, so in this body of Christ, the church—I mean that which is visible—all these are also fulfilled and performed, and yet the body suffers no maims, much less the head any detriment.

This text, then, is so far from giving encouragement to any particular man to be careful of his own well-being as the expositors, of whatever persuasion in controverted points, take from the text an argument that, for establishing and sustaining the whole body, a man is bound to dismiss all concerns for himself and give his life to strengthen those who are weak. This text as a common fountainhead has afforded justification for martyrdoms, for visiting those under pestilence, and for all those desertions of ourselves and of our natural right of preserving ourselves that we heretofore had occasion to insist upon.

6. Just as that construction consists well with those words, so does it also with the words in the next chapter, “No man ever hated his own flesh but nourished it, etc.” (Eph. 5:2-9). Because we are to speak of this hate when we come to Christ’s commandment about hating our life, here we will only say with Marlorat on this text, “He does not hate his flesh who hates its desires and would subject it to the spirit, any more than a goldsmith hates the gold that he casts into a furnace to purify and reduce to a better fashion.”

Since I have not found that they take from the armory of scripture any more or better weapons than these, we may here end this distinction.

Distinction IV

1. In the next distinction our business is to test of what force and proof their arms are against their adversary forces. We shall oppose two kinds of them. The first are natural and assured subjects, reasons arising naturally from texts of scripture. The other, as auxiliaries, are examples. For although we do not rely upon them, still we have the advantage that our adversaries can neither use nor profit from examples! Therefore, the answer that both Peter Martyr and Lavater, borrowing from him, make— that we must not live by examples and that if examples proved anything they would have the stronger side (after all, there have been more men who have not killed themselves than who have done so—may well seem peremptory or lazy and the impossibility of a better defense may seem to be so alloyed as to be irrelevant. To prepare us for a right understanding and application of these texts from scripture, we must linger a while on the nature, degrees, and effects of charity, the mother and form of all virtue, which not only will lead us to heaven (for faith opens the door for us) but also will continue with us when we are there, when both faith and hope are spent and useless.

Nowhere will we find a better portrait of charity than the one Saint Augustine has drawn: she does not love that which should not be loved, and she does not neglect that which should be loved; she does not bestow more love upon that which deserves less love, nor does she equally love more and less worthiness; she does not bestow upon equal worthiness more and less love. To this charity the same blessed and happy Father apportions this growth. “Initiated, increased, grown great, and perfected—and the last is,” he says, “when in regard for it we hate this life.” Still, he acknowledges a

higher charity than this one. For Peter the Lombard allows charity this growth: “Beginning, proficient, perfect, more perfect, and most perfect.” He cites Saint Augustine who calls it “Perfect charity to be ready to die for another.” But when he comes to that than which none can be greater, he says the apostle came “To desire to depart this life and be with Christ” (Phil. 1:23).

So, “One may love God with all his heart, and yet he may grow and love God more with all his heart, for the first was commanded in the law, and yet the counsel of perfection was given to him who said that he had fulfilled the first commandment.” Just as Saint Augustine found a degree above charity, which made a man ready to offer life, which is to desire to depart and be with Christ, so there is a degree above that, which is to do it.

This is the virtue by which martyrdom, which is not such in itself, becomes an act of highest perfection. This is the virtue too that assures any suffering that proceeds from it to be infallibly accompanied by the grace of God. Upon the assurance and testimony of a rectified conscience that we have a charitable purpose, let us consider how far we may adventure on the authority of scripture in this matter that we have in hand.

2. To begin with, look at the frame and working of Saint Paul’s argument to the Corinthians, “Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing” (I Cor. 13:3). Two things seem evident. First, in a general notion and common reputation it was counted a high degree of perfection to die so, and therefore it was not counted against the law of nature. Second, by this exception, “without charity,” with love it might be done well and profitably.

As for the first, if anybody thinks the apostle here takes an example of an impossible thing, as when it is said, “If an angel from heaven teach another doctrine” (Gal. 1:8), he will, I believe, correct himself if he considers the foregoing verses and the apostle’s progress in his argument. In order to dignify charity the most that he can, he undervalues all other gifts, which there were ambitiously liked. As for eloquence, he says it is nothing to have all languages, even that of the angels (I Cor. 13:1). This is not put literally, since angels have no language, but to express a high degree of eloquence, as Calvin says on this point; or, according to Nicholas of Lyra, by language is meant the desire of communicating our ideas to one another. Then Paul adds that a knowledge of mysteries and prophesies, which also was much

liked, is also nothing (I Cor. 13:2). The same for miraculous faith; it is also nothing.

The first of these gifts does not make a man better, for Balaam's ass could speak (Num. 22:30) and still was an ass. The second gift Judas and the Pharisees had. The third gift is so small a matter that as much as a grain of mustard seed (Matt. 17:20) is enough to remove mountains. All these were feasible things and were sometimes done. After he had passed through the gifts of knowledge and the gifts of utterance, he presents the gifts of good works in the same stages. Therefore, he says, "If I feed the poor with all my goods" (I Cor. 13:3), which he presents as a harder thing than either of the others because in the others God gives to me but here I give to the other, yet as a thing possible to be done. Then he presents the last, "If I give my body," as the hardest of all and yet, like all the rest, sometimes to be done.

What I observed as arising secondly from this argument was that with charity such a death might be acceptable. I know that the Donatists are said to have made this use of these words. Still, the intent and the aim condition every action and infuse the poison or the nourishment that those who follow suck from it. The Donatists rigorously and tyrannously racked and extorted so much from this text, in order to present themselves to others to be promiscuously killed, and if that were denied them they might kill themselves as well as those who refused to kill them. Still, I say, I do not doubt that so much may be gathered from this text as by these words, "If I give my body" (I Cor. 13:3), is implied rather more than a prompt and willing yielding of it when I am forced to do so by the persecuting magistrate.

These words will justify the deed of the martyr Nicephorus, being then in perfect charity. His case was this. Having some enmity with Sapricius, who was brought to the place where he was to receive the bloody crown of martyrdom, he fell down to Sapricius and begged from him a pardon of all former bitternesses. Sapricius, elated with the glory of martyrdom, refused him but was soon punished. His faith cooled and he lived. Nicephorus, standing by, stepped into his place and cried, "I am also a Christian," and so provoked the magistrate to execute him, lest from the faintness of Sapricius the cause might have received a wound or a scorn. I take this to be a giving of his body.

Where there is a necessity to confirm weaker Christians it is very probable, as in this case, that a man may be bound to commit self-homicide. So there may be cases in which a very exemplary man before a prosecutor of cunning and subtle carriage can in no other way give his body for testimony to God's truth, to which he may then be bound, except by doing it himself.

3. Since men naturally and customarily thought it good to die by self-homicide, and that such a death with charity was acceptable, so it is generally said by Christ, "The good shepherd gives his life for his sheep" (John 10:11). This is a justification and approval of our inclination to do so. For to say that the good do it is to say that they who do it are good!

Since we all are sheep of one fold, so in many cases we all are shepherds of one another and owe one another this duty of giving our temporal lives for another's spiritual advantage, even for his temporal advantage. That I may abstain from purging myself when another's crime is imputed to me is grounded in another text such as this one, where it is said, "The greatest love is to bestow his life for his friend" (John 15:13). In this matter and all of its kind we must remember that we are commanded to do as Christ did. How Christ gave his body we shall have to consider below.

4.—On these grounds, Saint Peter's zeal was so forward and carried him so high that he wanted to die for the shepherd, for he says, "I will lay down my life for your sake" (John 13:37). All expositors say this was merely and purely out of natural affection, without examination of his own strength to do it, but soon nature carried him fully to that promise. In a more deliberate and orderly resolution Saint Paul testifies of himself, "I will gladly be spent for your souls" (II Cor. 12:15).

5.—A Christian nature does not rest in knowing that we may do it, that charity makes it good, that the good do it, and that we must always promise (that is, incline) to do it and do something towards it. A Christian nature will have the prefect fulness of doing it in the resolution, doctrine, and example of our blessed savior, who said, in fact, "I lay down my life for my sheep" (John 10:15). He used the present tense, says Musculus, because he was ready to do it, just as Paul and Barnabas, while still alive, are said to have laid down their lives for Christ. But I rather think that, because exposing oneself to danger is not properly called dying, Christ said this at that time because his passion had begun. All his doings here were steps toward laying down his life.

All words are defective to express the abundant and overflowing charity of our savior, for if we could express all that he did, even that would not come near to what he would do if need be. It is observed by Malloni—I confess too credulous an author, yet one who administers good and wholesome incitements to devotion—that Christ going to Emmaus spoke of his passion so slightly, as though he had in three days forgotten all that he had suffered for us.

Christ in an apparition to Saint Charles says that he would be content to die again, if need be. Yes, to Saint Bridgit he said that "For any one soul he would suffer as much in every limb as he had suffered for all the world in his whole body." It is noted as an extremely high degree of charity, according to Anselm, that Christ's blessed mother said, "Rather than he should not have been crucified, she would have done it with her own hands." Certainly his charity was not inferior to hers. He did as much as any could be willing to do.

As he himself said, "No man can take away my soul," and, "I have power to lay it down" (John 10:18). Without doubt, no man took it away, nor was there any other cause of his dying at that time than his own will, for many martyrs have hanged alive upon crosses for many days, and the thieves were still alive, and therefore Pilate marveled to hear that Christ was so soon dead. "His soul," says Saint Augustine, "did not leave his body under constraint but because he willed it to happen and he willed when and how it happened." Of this Saint Thomas Aquinas produced this sign, that he still had his body's nature in its full strength, because at the last moment he was able to cry with a loud voice. Marlorat gathers that whereas our heads decline after our death by the slackness of the sinews and muscles, Christ first on his own bowed down his head and then gave up the ghost. Although it is truly said, "After they have scourged him, they will put him to death" (Luke 18:33), yet it is said thus because, maliciously and purposely to kill him, they inflicted upon him those pains that in time would have killed him. But nothing that they had done occasioned his dying so quickly.

Therefore Aquinas, a man neither of unholy thoughts nor of bold, irreligious, or scandalous phrase or elocution (still, I do not venture so far in his behalf as Mazzolini does, that "It is impossible that he should have spoken any things against faith or good manners"), does not stop short of saying that "Christ was so much the cause of his death as one is of his own wetting who might but would not shut the window when the rain beats in."

This actual emitting of his soul is his death and was his own act, before his natural time. His best-loved apostle could imitate it who also died when he would and went into his grave and there buried himself, which is reported of only a very few others, and by not very credible authors. We find Christ's emitting of his own soul thus celebrated: "That is a brave death which is accepted unconstrained, and that is a heroic act of fortitude if a man, when an urgent occasion is presented, exposes himself to a certain and assured death, as he did."

It is said that Christ did just as Saul did, who thought it foul and dishonorable to die by the hand of an enemy. Also it is said that Apollonia and others who anticipated the fury of executioners and cast themselves into the fire were imitating this act by our savior of giving up his soul before he was constrained to do it. Therefore, if the act of our blessed savior, for whom there was no more required for death but that he should will that his soul depart, was the same as Saul's and these martyrs' actual helping further their own deaths (without which they could not have died), then we are taught that all those texts about "Giving up our bodies to death" and "Laying down the soul" signify more than yielding to death when it comes.

6. As I understand it, there is a further degree of cheerful readiness and proneness to such a death expressed in the phrase of John 12:25, "He who hates his life in this world shall keep it in life eternal"; also, in that of Luke 14:26, "Unless he hates his own life, he cannot be my disciple." Such a loathing to live is what is spoken of in Hebrews 12:35, "Some were racked and would not be delivered, so that they might receive a better resurrection." Calvin interprets John 12:25 as a readiness to die and expresses it elegantly as carrying our life in our own hands and offering it to God for a sacrifice. The Jesuits in their rule extend the matter this far, "Let everyone think that this was said directly to him, 'Hate your life.'"

Those who, on the other hand, stand by this phrase, "No man hates his own flesh" (Eph. 5:29) must, to yield an argument against self- homicide in every case, also allow that the hate that is commanded here authorizes that act in some cases. Saint Augustine, apprehending the strength of this text, denies that by its authority the Donatists can justify their self-homicide when they wish to die. Still, in those cases that are exempt from his rules, this text may encourage a man not to neglect the honor of God for the sole reason that nobody else will take his life.

7.—The Holy Ghost proceeds more directly in the First Epistle of Saint John 3:16 and shows us a necessary duty, “Because he laid down his life for us, therefore we ought to lay down our lives for our brethren.” All these texts bring us to a true understanding of charity and to a contempt of this life in respect of charity.

As these texts inform us how ready we must be, so all the texts that direct us by the example of Christ to do as he did show that, in cases when our lives must be given up, we need not always wait for extrinsic force by others but, as he did in perfect charity so we in such degrees of it as this life and our nature are capable of, we must die by our own will rather than let his glory be neglected, whenever, as Paul says, Christ may be magnified in our bodies (Phil. 1:20), or the spiritual good of another whose good we are bound to advance importunes it.

8.—To this readiness of dying for his brethren Saint Paul had so accustomed himself and made it his nature that, except for his general resolution of always doing what would promote their happiness, he could hardly have obtained for himself permission to live. At first he says he did not know which to wish for, life or death. Therefore, unless some circumstance inclines or averts us, life and death are generally equal to our nature. Then, after much perplexity, he made up his mind, and he desired to be released and to be with Christ. Therefore, a holy man may wish it. Still, he corrected that again, because he says, “For me to abide in the flesh is more needful for you” (Phil. 1:24). Therefore, charity must be the rule of our wishes and actions in this matter.

9.—Another text, Galatians 4:15, although it does not extend to death, proves that holy men may be ready to express their loves to others by violence to themselves: “If it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.” Calvin says, “This was more than to pour out one’s life.” Saint Paul does not reprehend this readiness in them.

10.—The highest degree of compassionate charity for others is that of the apostle in contemplating the Jews’ dereliction, “I would wish myself to be separated from Christ for my brethren’s sake” (Rom. 9:3).

The bitterness of this damnation he himself teaches us to understand when in another place he wishes the same “To those who do not love Jesus Christ” (I Cor. 16:22). This fearful wish that charity excused in him was utter damnation, as all the expositors say. Although I believe with Calvin

that at this time, in a zealous fury, he deliberately did not remember his own election and therefore cannot in that respect be said to have resisted the will of God, still it remains as an argument to us that charity will recompense and justify many excesses that appear to be unnatural, irregular, and enormous ecstasies.

11. As in the apostle to the gentiles so in the law-giver of the Jews, the same compassion worked the same result—and more. Moses did not rest in wishing but argued face to face with God, "If you pardon them, your mercy shall appear, but if you will not, I pray you to blot my name out of the book that you have written" (Exod. 32:32).

I know that many, out of a reasonable idea that it became Moses to be reposed, dispassionate, and of temperate affections in his conversation with God, are of the opinion that he strayed no further in this wish and imprecation than to be content that his name be blotted out of the scriptures and so to lose the honor of being known to posterity as a remarkable instrument of God's power and mercy. But since a natural infirmity could work so much upon Christ—in whom we may suspect no inordi- nateness of affections to divert him a little and make him slip a faint wish of escaping the cup (Matt. 26:39)—why might not a brave and noble zeal exalt Moses enough to desire to restore his nation to the love of God by his own destruction? As certainly as the first of these was without sin, so the other might be out of a habitual assuredness of his salvation. As Paulinus says to Amandus, "You may be bold in your prayers to God for me and say, 'Forgive him, or blot me out,' for you cannot be blotted out; justice cannot blot out the just." Always keeping in our minds that our example is Christ and that he died unconstrained, it will suffice to have learned from these texts that in charity men may so die, have so done, and ought so to do.

The last thing that remains is to consider the examples reported in the scriptures. That cannot keep us long, because a few rules will include many examples, and the few rules that are applicable to these stories have already often been gone over. Other rules that may enlighten and govern us in all occurrences I postpone for many reasons to a maturer deliberation and discourse.

Distinction V

1. When I entered into the examination of texts from scripture, it seemed to me to have some weight that in all the judicial and ceremonial law there was no abomination of self-homicide. Just so, in relating the stories of those who killed themselves, the phrases of scripture never put them down by any aspersion or imputation for that act if they were otherwise virtuous, nor does it aggravate for that reason their former wickedness if they were wicked.

For my part, I am content to submit myself to the rule that is delivered by Irenaeus, “It does not become us to attack those things that the scripture does not reprehend but simply lays down, nor should we make ourselves more diligent than God; but if anything seems to us irregular, our endeavor must be to search out its type and signification.”

Nor shall I, for all of this, be in the danger of Beza’s answer to the argument of Ochino that some of the patriarchs lived unreprehended in polygamy. This is inconclusive, answered Beza, because the scripture is silent about Jacob’s (Gen. 29:21-30) and Lot’s (Gen. 19:30-38) incest and about David’s unjust judgment (II Sam. 11); but Ziba did not absolve them from guilt and transgression in these acts (I Sam. 9,16,19). Our case differs from all others, first, because this act of self-homicide is not shown to be sin by any text of the law, and second, because there is a concurrence of examples of this act without any reprehension. Thus Beza’s answer falls as far short from reaching us as it fell in not reaching home to the argument of Ochino against which it was opposed. If in debating these examples it is found that some very reverend authors have concluded a lack of repentance by self-homicide, and therefore utter desertion by God, and thus eternal perishing, then the circumstances as they appeared to that author then may have made his judgment just. But for anybody else to apply that case to others will not be safe. For according to Ennenckel, “Although a judge by reason of circumstances may interpret the law, that interpretation does not make law.”

2. Just as in the former distinctions we spoke of some approaches to the act of self-killing, so in this one we will pause briefly on two such steps. The first is the prophet “Who bade a stranger to strike him. Because the stranger would not, he pronounced a heavy judgment that was soon executed. Then he importuned another to strike him, who did it thoroughly, wounding him with a stroke” (I Kgs. 20:35). To the common understanding this was an unnatural thing that so holy a man would take such means to

have his body violated. It seems that the first stranger so understood it, but it pleased God to enlighten the second one. This I bring forth not as though the prophet inclined to it of his own disposition, for it is expressly in the text that God commanded him to do it.

But since this is the only place in all the scriptures where those who offer or desirously admit violence to their own bodies are said to have done it by the express motion of God, I gather that it is not without some boldness that others affirm, without the authority of the text, that the death of Samson and others had the same foundation, for it appears by this that when God would have it thus understood he is pleased to speak it plainly and expressly.

3.—Before we come to those who actually killed themselves, the next is Jonah 1:12. By frequently wishing his own death and moving the mariners to cast him into the sea, Jonah made many steps toward the very act. I know that it is everywhere said that these words, “Take me and cast me into the sea,” proceeded from a prophetic spirit. Saint Jerome says, “In this prophetic spirit he foresaw that the Ninevites would repent, and so his preaching would be discredited.” But if this is so, must he not also in the same prophetic spirit see that their repentance must be occasioned by his going there and preaching? If this request for his own destruction—they were then innocent in their understanding, for they prayed, “Lay not innocent blood upon us” (Jonah 1:14)—was by divine motion, shall we dare also to impute to similar motions and spirit his angry importuning of death? “Take, I beseech you, my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live” (Jonah 4:3). Then, after he wished in his heart to die, he added, “I do well to be angry unto the death” (Jonah 4:9).

Saint Jerome calls him “Saint Jonah.” When Nicholas of Lyra observes that Jerome had not done so to any of the other prophets, he concludes that this testimony was most needed by Jonah, who by his many reluctances against God’s will might otherwise fall into some suspicion of eternal perishing. We must be far from fearing such a fate in so eminent and exemplary a type of Christ. But we have no ground to admit any particular inspiration of God’s spirit, since Jerome and Nicholas of Lyra pronounce him holy, despite all of these reluctances. Thus we may esteem him advised, ordinate, and rectified in all these approaches that he made by wishing for and consenting to his own death.

4.—Samson is the first of those whom the scriptures register to have killed themselves. The man is so exemplary! The times before him

prophesied him, for of him it is said, “Dan shall judge his people” (Gen. 49:16). The times after him regarded him more consummately in Christ, of whom he was a figure. Even in his own times other nations seem to have had a type or copy of him in Hercules. His act of self-killing is celebrated by the church to everlasting memory as the act of a martyr, and by very many others in their homilies and expositions. The renowned Paulinus says, “God send me the death of Samson and Samson’s blindness, that I may live to God and look to God.”

This general applause and concurrence in praising the act has made many, being loath either to depart from their opinion who extol him or to admit anything that may countenance that manner of dying, think (or at least write) that he did not intend to kill himself. Two very learned men, Francisco de Vitoria and Gregorio de Valencia, labor to seem to be of this persuasion. Beside the fact that exposing himself thus to inevitable danger is the same fault as self-homicide, when there is any fault in it, the text itself is against them. For Samson died with these words in his mouth, “Let me lose my life with the Philistines” (Judges 16:30).

These authors sometimes add that he intended his own death not principally but only accidentally. (Calvin also says that Saint Paul did not desire death for death’s sake but to be with Christ.) This, however, can remove no man from our side of the argument, for we say the same, that this may be done only when the honor of God may be promoted in that way and no other.

Therefore, to justify Samson’s act, Saint Augustine, equally zealous of Samson’s honor and of his own conscience, still builds on his old foundation, “This was by special inspiration from God.” Because it does not appear in the story explicitly or implicitly, this may be refuted as easily as it is presented. To give strength to this opinion of Augustine, our countryman Sayer presents one reason preceding the act. Pedraza the Spaniard gives another reason subsequent to the act. The first is that he prepared himself for it by prayer. But in this prayer you may observe much humanity, weakness, and self-regard. “O Lord,” says he, “I beseech you, strengthen me alone at this time, that I may be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes” (Judges 16:28). The second reason is that, because he effected what he desired, it is to be presumed that to the end for which he asked it God restored his strength to him.

In the text it appears that already his hair had begun to grow out again, and thus his strength was somewhat renewed. But does this prove any impulse, incitement, and prevenience of the holy God to that particular act, or rather only a habitual accompanying and awakening of him to such actions by which God might be honored and glorified, whenever an occasion was presented? Therefore, when he felt his strength in part refreshed and had by prayer entreated the perfecting of it, seeing that they took continual occasion from his dejection to scorn and reproach his God, Samson turned with an equal fervor to revenge their offense against him and God, and to remove the wretched occasion of it.

A very subtle author, Georgius, says Samson had the same reason to kill himself that he had to kill them, the same authority, the same privilege, and the same safeguard from sin. He died, the same man says, with the same zeal as Christ, unconstrained. Writes Pereira, “In this manner of dying, as much as in anything else, he was a type of Christ.”

5. The next example is Saul. Whether he performed and consummated the act of killing himself or the Amalekite contributed his help makes no difference to our purpose. That the latter was true may consist well enough with the first telling of the story in I Samuel 31, and it appears to be the more likely and probable in the second telling in II Samuel I. By Josephus it is absolutely so declared. Peter Comestor’s *Scholastic History* also says that Saul was too weak to force the sword through his body.

Two things used to be disputed about Saul—whether or not he was saved and whether if he perished it was for impenitence either testified or presumed by this act of his. The Jews are generally indulgent toward him. The Christians are generally severe for the reason that it is said of him, “Saul died for his transgressions against the Lord and his word and for asking counsel of a witch” (I Chron. 10:13). This does not necessarily indicate an impenitence or a second death of damnation. For the Jews say that he, believing the sentence of Samuel (I Sam 28:16) in the apparitions and accepting that decree as from God, repented his former life, and then presented and delivered up himself and his sons, conformably to the revealed will of God, there in the field to be sacrificed to him. That is to understand Samuel’s words, “You shall be with me,” to be spoken not generally of the state of the dead but of the state of the just, because both Samuel himself was just and so was Jonathan, whose condition in this promise of being with Samuel was the same as his father’s.

Nicholas of Lyra says, “All Jews and some Christians agree that, lest by his reproach dishonor might redound upon God, a good and zealous man may kill himself, as Samson and the virgins did.” He adds, “If other reasons were not sufficient to excuse Saul, it also might justly be applied to him that he did it by divine inspiration.” From these statements I observe two things. First, Nicholas presumes there are other reasons that are sufficient in some cases, whether or not they were there in Saul’s case. Second, there is the reason for which Nicholas presumes that Saul died well, “Because the contrary is not declared in scriptures nor determined by the church.”

Saul, indeed, has a good testimony of sanctity in this act from Malloni: “As Christ died when he would, so did Saul, thinking it dishonorable to die by the hand of his and God’s enemies.” The argument that Paul of Burgos makes to the contrary suffers more force and violence in being brought in than it gives strength to his opinion; it is, “If the act were justifiable in Saul, it would have been so too in the Amalekite, if his profession to David was true that he had killed Saul, and consequently David was unjust in that execution.” Besides that, the Amalekite had no consciousness or inward knowledge of Saul’s just reasons, nor any other warrant except his commandment. It might have, and to him seemed likely to have, proceeded from Saul’s infirmities, and it might well appear to David from the Amalekite’s coming to tell him the news that he had human concerns in doing it and a purpose only to deserve well of David. When both judge and prisoner are innocent, often the executioner may be a murderer.

Such human concerns as weariness, despair, shame, fear, fidelity to his master, amazement, and so forth, stand in the way between Saul’s armor-bearer and all the excuses in our understandings. Although the phrase of scripture imputes nothing to him for the fact that he killed himself, still I have found nobody who offers any particular excuse in his defense.

6.—Neither do I find anything to excuse Ahitophel’s death (II Sam. 17:23), although, as I said of the other one, the story does not condemn that particular act. The text calls his counsel good, and it seems that he was not transported with passion, because he set his house in order, and he was buried in his father’s grave when Absalom, slain by another’s hand, was cast into a pit (II Sam. 18:14-17). But if he did it over a mere dispute of his own disgrace, or from fear of failure, or out of any self- concern, without advancing God’s glory, and he did not repent, then he perished.

7.—The usual (though not universal) opinion of Judas, the most sinful instrument of the most merciful work, is that he killed himself, but whether or not by hanging is more debated.

From the words in Acts 1:18, “He threw himself down headlong and burst asunder, and his bowels gushed out,” Euthymius thinks that while he hanged he was rescued and carried away, and that afterwards he killed himself by throwing himself headlong. Brenz leaves it neutral for us to think what we will. Oecumenius says that he did not only outlive this hanging but also grew to so enormous a size and became such a burden to himself that he was not able to get himself out of a coach’s way and so had his guts crushed out. Oecumenius got this from Papias, the disciple of Saint John, whose times cannot be thought ignorant or incurious of Judas’s story. There it is further told that others said Judas, being swollen to that vastness and corrupted with vermin, laid himself down in his field, and there his guts broke out. This version Theophylact follows.

It happens very often that some particular Father, of strong reputation and authority in his own time, snatches and swallows some probable interpretation of scripture. Then he digests it into his homilies, applies it in exhortations and encouragements as the diseases of his audience or his age require, imagines in it delightful and figurative insinuations, and sets it to the music of his style. In fact, every man who is accustomed to these meditations will often find in himself such a spiritual wantonness and devout straying into such delicacies. Then the sense that was only probable grows to be necessary, and those who follow that Father would rather enjoy his wit than exercise their own, just as we are often loath to change or remove a counterfeit gem by reason of its fine setting. In this way, I think, it became so widely believed that the fruit Eve ate was an apple, that Lot’s wife was turned into a pillar of salt, that Absalom was hanged by the hair of the head, that Jephthah killed his daughter, and many others that grew current not from evidence in the text but because such an interpretation was most useful and applicable.

Judas’s case may well belong to this number. If not, still the act of killing himself is not added to his faults in any scriptural text, not even in those two Psalms (69, 109) that are commonly taken to be prophetically intended and directed as particular accusations against him.

Origen dared to hope even for this man (whose sin exceeded mercy if any ever did so), not out of Origen’s erroneous compassion and sinful

charity by which he thinks that even the devil will be saved, but by virtue of Judas's repentance. He says, "The devil led him to the sin and then induced in him the sorrowfulness that swallowed him." But speaking of Judas's repentance, he says, "Those words, 'when Judas saw that he was condemned' (Matt. 27:3), apply to Judas himself, for Christ was not yet condemned. From this consciousness and consideration began his repentance." Origen also says, "It may be that Satan, who had entered into him, stayed with him until Christ was betrayed and then left him, and thereafter repentance followed. Perhaps," Origen goes on, "he went to precede and go before his master, who was to die, and to meet him with his naked soul, so he might gain mercy by his confession and prayers."

Although Calvin's purpose is to enervate and maim (or at least to declare defective) the repentance that is admitted as sufficient by the Roman Church, he says that "in Judas there was perfect contrition of heart, confession by the mouth, and satisfaction for the money." But Petilianus, against whom Saint Augustine wrote, proceeded further than any in justifying Judas's last act. He said, "In suffering death when he repented, and thus was a confessor, he became a martyr." This opinion, pronounced singularly and indefensibly, Saint Augustine answers just as cholerically, "He left to such a noose" [i e., Judas left a noose for the likes of Petilianus]. Even so, Saint Augustine himself confesses that an innocent man would have sinned more in such an act than Judas did, because in his execution there were some degrees of justice.

I intended not to speak of his actual impenitence or of his repentance, but only to observe to you that this last act is not imputed to him, nor is repentance said to be precluded by it.

8. Nobody denies the passive action of Eleazar, but they hold that the endangering of himself was an act of virtue. Still it was a forsaking and exposing of himself to certain destruction (I Macc. 6:43-46). For every elephant had thirty-two men on him and was guarded by 1,000 foot-soldiers and 500 horsemen; the elephant he slew was in his opinion the king's and therefore the better provided. Even if prior to killing the elephant he hoped to escape, his creeping under it was a direct killing of himself, as expressly as Samson's pulling down the house. The reasons for this action are rendered in the text to have been to deliver his people and to earn a perpetual name.

Saint Ambrose extols this act by many glorious circumstances; for instance, “That he flung away his shield, which might have sheltered him, so that, despising death, he forced his way into the midst of the army.” Also, “Being hemmed in rather than overwhelmed by catastrophe, he was buried in his triumph.” Again, “By death he begat peace as the heir of his valor.”

Very many scholastics have stretched and exercised their wits in praise of this action. Cajetan gives a reason for it that as is applicable to very many self-homicides: “To expose ourselves to certain death, if our first aim is not our own death but the common good, is lawful. For,” he says, “our actions that may be morally good or bad must be judged to be such by the reason that first motivates them, not by any accident, concomitance, accompaniment, or succeeding of them, although necessarily.” This decision of Cajetan’s will include many cases and instances that are condemned headlongly by intemperate censures.

9. The fall of Razis, our last example, is reported as follows. “He was beseiged and set afire. Willing to die manfully and to escape reproach that would be unworthy of his house, he fell upon his sword. In haste, he missed his first stroke and threw himself from the castle wall. Still, he got up again and ran to a high rock, took out his own bowels, and threw them among the people, calling upon the Lord of life and spirit. So he died” (II Macc. 14:41-46 excerpted).

This act the text does not accuse. Saint Thomas Aquinas accuses it of nothing except cowardliness, which Aristotle also imputes to this manner of dying, as we said before. Either Aquinas then spoke serviceably and advantageously to the point that he had in hand, or else he spoke for the most part, because for the most part infirmities provoke men to this act.

Saint Augustine, who argued as earnestly as Aristotle that this act is not one of greatness of mind, confesses that it was just that in Cleombrotus who, simply upon reading Plato’s *Phaedo,* killed himself. Said Augustine, “When no calamity urged him, no crime either true or imputed, nothing but greatness of mind moved him to apprehend death and to break the sweet bands of this life.” To be sure, he added that “It was done rather greatly than well.” But we now are seeking only the concession that sometimes there is in this act greatness and courage. What moved Aristotle and all the rest to be loath to cite too many cases was to quench in men their natural love of self-homicide.

For Augustine says, “Except for Lucrecia, it is not easy to find any example worth prescribing or imitating—except Cato, not only because he did it but because, being reputed learned and honest, men might justly think that what he did was well done and might well be done again.” For all this, he is loath to let Cato’s act pass with much approbation, for he adds, “Yet many of his learned friends thought it a weakness to let him die thus.” He adds it because, when men have before them the precedent of a brave example, they do not ask further than *what* he did—not *why* he did it.

It is truly said, “Examples do not stop, nor do they consist in the degree where they began, but they grow, and no man thinks that what has profited another is unworthy for himself.” Saint Augustine, for this reason loath to give glory to many examples, still allows all greatness and praise to Regulus, of whom we spoke before—even though, to my understanding, there are in this example many impressions of falsehood and of ostentation, from all of which Cato’s story is free.

To conclude this point, whether it is always done from cowardliness, Diogenes Laertius says that “Antisthenes the philosopher seemed to show more weakness in that, lying extremely sick, and Diogenes asking him if he lacked a friend (meaning to kill him) and also offering his dagger to do it himself, the philosopher said he desired an end of pain but not of life.”

Since the self-homicide of Razis may have proceeded from greatness, Nicholas of Lyra excused it from all sin, by reasons that are applicable to many others. He says, “Either to escape torment, by which a man might probably be seduced to idolatry, or to take away the occasion of making others reproach God in him, a man may kill himself, for both of these cases are ordained by God.” Francisco de Vitoria allows this as the more probable opinion. Soto and Valencia follow Aquinas’s opinion. Paul of Burgos condemns it on the presumption that he could not do it for the love of the common good, because the act could not redeem his people who were already captive. Paul of Burgos’s accusing him helps our case in that, if by his death he could have redeemed them, he might lawfully have done it.

CONCLUSION

This is as far as I allowed my discourse to progress in this way, forbidding it earnestly all dark and dangerous withdrawals and diversions into points of our free will and God's destiny. Still, allowing many ordinary contingencies to be under choice, it may seem reasonable that our main periods—of birth, death, and major alterations—in this life are more immediately worked upon by God's determination. It is usefully said and applicable to good purpose (although by a wicked man, Muhammad, with the intention of crossing Moses) that "Man was made of shadow and the devil of fire." For as shadow is not darkness but grosser light, so is man's understanding in these mysteries not blind but clouded. As fire does not always give light (for fire is accidental and must have air to work upon) but burns naturally, so the desire of knowledge that the devil kindles in us—he as willingly bellows to inflame a heart curious of knowledge as he brings more ashes to stupify and bury deeper a slumbering understanding—does not always give us light. But fire always burns us and imprints upon our judgment stigmatic marks, and at least it sears up our conscience.

If the reasons that differ from me and my reasons are otherwise equal, still theirs have this disadvantage; they fight with themselves and suffer a civil war of contradiction. For many of their reasons incline us to a love of this life and a horror of death, and yet they say often that we are by nature too much addicted to all that. It is well noted by Alcuin (I think from Saint Augustine) that "Although there are four things that we must love, yet there is no precept given concerning more than two, God and our neighbor." Thus the others, which concern loving ourselves, may be omitted on some occasions.

Enough has been occasionally inserted above concerning the benefits of death. Having presented Cyprian's encouragement to it—who out of a contemplation that the whole frame of the world decayed and languished, cries to us, "The walls and the roof shake, and would you not go out? You are tired in a pilgrimage, and would you not go home?"—I shall end by applying to death, which deserves it better, Ausonius's thanks to the emperor, "You provide that your benefits and the good that you bring shall not be transitory and that the ills from which you deliver us shall never return." So, because death has a little bitterness, but medicinally, and a little

alloy, but to make it more useful, they would utterly decline and avert our nature from it.

Paracelsus says of that foul, contagious disease [i e., syphilis] that then had invaded mankind in a few places and has since overflowed into all places, God first inflicted that disease for the punishment of general licentiousness, and when the disease would not reduce us he sent a second and worse affliction, ignorant and torturing physicians. I may say the same of this case, that in punishment of Adam's sin God cast upon us an infectious death, and since then he has sent us a worse plague of men who accompany death with so much horror and fright that it can hardly be made wholesome and agreeable to us. They teach with too much liberty what Hippocrates admitted in cases of much profit and little danger, "Worse meat may be given to a patient, if it is pleasanter, and worse drink, if it is more acceptable."

I thought it needful to oppose this antidote—as much to encourage men toward a just contempt of this life and to restore them to their nature, which is a desire of supreme happiness in the next life through the loss of this one, as to rectify and wash again the frame of those who, religiously assuring themselves that in cases when we are destitute of other means, we might be to ourselves the stewards of God's benefits and the ministers of his merciful justice.

These persons, being innocent within themselves, as Ennodius said, had incurred injury of opinion. Still, as I said before, I abstained intentionally from extending this discourse to particular rules or instances, both because I dare not profess myself a master in so curious a science and because the limits of the subject are obscure, steep, slippery, and narrow, and also because every error is deadly, except where a competent diligence has been employed and a mistake of our conscience may provide an excuse.

The curing of diseases by touch or by charms is forbidden by various laws, even though one excellent surgeon (Paracelsus) and one excellent philosopher (Pomponazzi) are of the opinion that it may be done—because man, who is all, is capable of whatever virtue the heavens infuse into any creature, and, being sustained when that virtue is exacted, may receive a similar impression or may give it to a word or character made at that instant. Although this curing is forbidden by various laws, because of a just prejudice that vulgar owners of such a virtue would misuse it, still none objects that the kings of England and France should cure one sickness by

such a means, nor that the kings of Spain should exorcise demon-possessed persons in this way, because kings are justly presumed to use all their power to the glory of God. So it is fitting that this privilege of which we speak should be contracted and restrained.

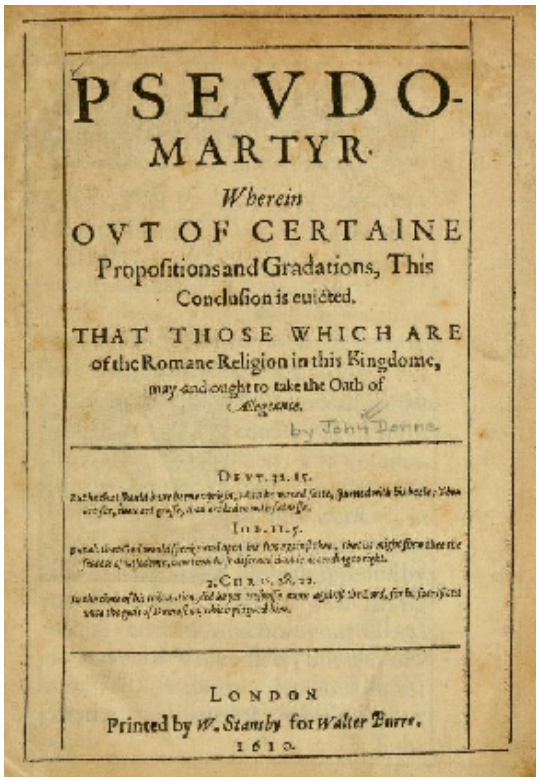
That is certainly true of what Cassian says of a lie, “It has the nature of [the herb] hellebore, wholesome in desperate diseases but otherwise poison,” although I do not agree with him that, “We are in desperate diseases whenever we are in a state of great wealth or injury, and in humility to the shunning of vainglory.” However, if Cassian mistakes that and we this, yet as he, Origen, Chrysostom, and Jerome are excused for following Plato’s opinion that a lie might have the nature of medicine and be allowed in many cases (because in their time the church had not declared herself in that point nor pronounced that a lie was naturally evil), by the same reason I am excusable in this paradox.

If prejudice or contempt for my weakness or misdevotion has blocked any against the reasons for my case and against charity, such that they have not been pleased to taste and digest them, I must leave them to their drowsiness and bid them enjoy the favor of that indulgent physician, “Let him who cannot digest food sleep.”

PSEUDO-MARTYR

This 1610 polemical tract argues that English Roman Catholics should take the Oath of Allegiance of James I of England. Donne had converted from Catholicism, but had not moved decisively into the Protestant camp. From 1604 he was involved in controversial theology as an onlooker, assisting his friend Thomas Morton in a reply to James Anderton, commissioned by Richard Bancroft. In publishing this work, Donne entered directly into one of the major debates of the period, supporting Sir Edward Coke against the Jesuit Robert Parsons. *Pseudo-Martyr* launched Donne's career in the Church of England, establishing his name as one of the prominent religious thinkers of the time.

With regret, no transcription of the text is available in the public domain, so the text cannot appear in this eBook. However, readers can access an original publication of the text for free via this weblink.



PSEVDO-
MARTYR.

Wherein

OVT OF CERTAINE
Propositions and Gradations, This
Conclusion is euicted.

THAT THOSE WHICH ARE
of the Romane Religion in this Kingdome,
may and ought to take the Oath of
Allegeance.

by John Donne

DEVT. 33. 17.

And his glory shall be like the firstling of his bullock, and his hornes like the hornes of Vnicornes: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

IOS. 11. 5.

And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

2. CHRON. 18. 22.

And the Lord said, I will intice him. And thou shalt prevail also: go forth, and do even so.

LONDON
Printed by *W. Stanby* for *Walter Burre.*
1610.

The original frontispiece

IGNATIUS HIS CONCLAVE

This 1611 work satirises the Jesuits and concerns the story of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, who is portrayed as being in Hell: The text's purpose is to mock Jesuit evangelism by making references to many scientists of the day, including Copernicus, Kepler, Brahe and Galileo.

IGNATIUS HIS CONCLAVE

In the twinckling of an eye, I saw all the roomes in Hell open to my sight. And by the benefit of certain spectacles, I know not of what making, but, I thinke, of the same, by which *Gregory* the great, and *Beda* did discerne so distinctly the soules of their friends, when they were discharged from their bodies, and sometimes the soules of such men as they knew not by sight, and of some that were never in the world, and yet they could distinguish them flying into Heaven, or conversing with living men, I saw all the channels in the bowels of the Earth; and all the inhabitants of all nations, and of all ages were suddenly made familiar to me. I thinke truely, *Robert Aquinas* when he tooke *Christs* long Oration, as he hung upon the Crosse, did use some such instrument as this, but applied to the eare: And so I thinke did he, which dedicated to *Adrian 6,* that Sermon which Christ made in prayse of his father *Joseph*: for else how did they heare that, which none but they ever heard? As for the *Suburbs* of Hel (I meane both *Limbo* and *Purgatory*) I must confesse I passed them over so negligently, that I saw them not: and I was hungerly caned, to find new places, never discovered before. For *Purgatory* did not seeme worthy to me of much diligence, because it may seeme already to have beene beleeved by some persons, in some corners of the *Romane Church,* for about 50 yeares; that is, ever since the Councell of *Trent* had a minde to fulfill the prophecies of *Homer, Virgil,* and the other *Patriarkes* of the *Papists*; and beeing not satisfied with making one *Transubstantiation,* purposed to bring in another: which is, to change *fables* into *Articles* of faith. Proceeding therefore to more inward places, I saw a secret place, where there were not many, beside *Lucifer* himselfe; to which, onely they had title, which had so attempted any innovation in this life, that they gave an affront to all antiquitie, and induced doubts, and anxieties, and scruples, and after, a libertie of beleeving what they would; at length established opinions, directly contrary to all established before. Of which place in *Hell, Lucifer* affoarded us heretofore some little knowledge, when more than 200 yeares since, in an *Epistle* written to the *Cardinall S. Sexti*, hee promised him a roome *in his palace, in the remotest part of his eternall Chaos,* which I take to bee this place. And here Pope *Boniface 3,* and *Mahomet,* seemed to contend about the highest

roome. Hee gloried of having expelled an old Religion, and *Mahomet* of having brought in a new: each of them a great deluge to the world. But it is to be feared, that *Mahomet* will faile therein, both because hee attributed something to the old *Testament,* and because he used *Sergius* as his fellow-bishop, in making the *Alcoran*; whereas it was evident to the supreme Judge *Lucifer,* (for how could he be ignorant of that, which himselfe had put into the Popes mind?) that *Boniface* had not onely neglected, but destroyed the policy of the State of *Israel*, established in the old *Testament*, when he prepared *Popes* a way, to tread upon the neckes of *Princes*, but that he also abstained from all Example and Coadjutor, when he took upon him that newe Name, which *Gregorie* himselfe (a Pope neither very foolish, nor over-modest) ever abhord. Besides that, every day affoords new Advocates to *Boniface* his side. For since the *Franciscans* were almost worne out (of whome their General, *Francis*, had seene 6000 souldiers in one army, that is, in one chapter) which, because they were then but fresh souldiers, he saw assisted with 1800 Divels, the *Jesuits* have much recompenced those decayes and damages, who sometimes have maintained in their Tents 200000 schollers. For though the Order of *Benedict* have ever bene so fruitfull, that they say of it, *That all the new Orders, which in later times have broken out, are but little springs, or drops, and that Order the Ocean, which hath sent out 52 Popes, 200 Cardinals, 1600 Archbishops, 4000 Bishops, and 50000 Saints approved by the Church,* and therefore it cannot be denied, but that *Boniface* his part is much releeved by that Order; yet if they be compared to the *Jesuits,* or to the weake and unperfect Types of them, the *Franciscans*, it is no great matter that they have done. Though therefore they esteeme *Mahomet* worthy of the name of an *Innovator,* & therein, perchance not much inferiour to *Boniface,* yet since his time, to ours, almost all which have followed his sect, have lived barren in an unanimity, and idle concord, and cannot boast that they have produced any new matter: whereas *Boniface* his successors, awakened by him, have ever beene fruitfull in bringing forth new sinnes, and new pardons, and idolatries, and King-killings. Though therefore it may religiously, and piously be beleeved, that *Turkes,* as well as *Papists*, come daily in troupes to the ordinary and common places of *Hell*; yet certainly to this more honourable roome, reserved for especiall Innovators, the *Papists* have more frequent accesse; and therefore *Mahomet* is out of hope to prevaile, and

must imitate the *Christian Emperours,* and be content to sit (as yet hee doth) at the Popes feet. Now to this place, not onely such endeavour to come, as have innovated in matters, directly concerning the soule, but they also which have done so, either in the Arts, or in conversation, or in any thing which exerciseth the faculties of the soule, and may so provoke to quarrelsome and brawling controversies: For so the truth be lost, it is no matter how. But the gates are seldome opened, nor scarce oftener then once in an Age. But my destiny favoured mee so much, that I was present then, and saw all the pretenders, and all that affected an entrance, and *Lucifer* himselfe, who then came out into the outward chamber, to heare them pleade their owne Causes. As soone as the doore creekt, I spied a certaine *Mathematitian,* which till then had bene busied to finde, to deride, to detrude *Ptolomey*; and now with an erect countenance, and setled pace, came to the gates, and with hands and feet (scarce respecting *Lucifer* himselfe) beat the dores, and cried; “Are these shut against me, to whom all the Heavens were ever open, who was a Soule to the Earth, and gave it motion?”

By this I knew it was *Copernicus*. For though I had never heard ill of his life, and therefore might wonder to find him there; yet when I remembered, that the *Papists* have extended the name, & the punishment of Heresie, almost to every thing, and that as yet I used *Gregories* and *Bedes* spectacles, by which one saw *Origen*, who deserved so well of the *Christian Church, burning in Hell,* I doubted no longer, but assured my selfe that it was *Copernicus* which I saw. To whome *Lucifer* sayd; “Who are you? For though even by this boldnesse you seeme worthy to enter, and have attempted a new faction even in *Hell*, yet you must first satisfie those which stand about you, and which expect the same fortune as you do.” “Except, *O Lucifer*,” answered *Copernicus*, “I thought thee of the race of the starre *Lucifer*, with which I am so well acquainted, I should not vouchsafe thee this discourse. I am he, which pitying thee who wert thrust into the Center of the world, raysed both thee, and thy prison, the Earth, up into the Heavens; so as by my meanes *God* doth not enjoy his revenge upon thee. The Sunne, which was an officious spy, and a betrayer of faults, and so thine enemy, I have appointed to go into the lowest part of the world. Shall these gates be open to such as have innovated in small matters? and shall they be shut against me, who have turned the whole frame of the world, and

am thereby almost a new Creator?" More then this he spoke not. *Lucifer* stuck in a meditation. For what should he do? It seemed unjust to deny entry to him which had deserved so well, and dangerous to graunt it, to one of so great ambitions, and undertakings: nor did he thinke that himselfe had attempted greater matters before his fall. Something he had which he might have conveniently opposed, but he was loath to utter it, least he should confesse his feare. But *Ignatius Layola* which was got neere his chaire, a subtile fellow, and so indued with the Divell, that he was able to tempt, and not onely that, but (as they say) even to possesse the Divell, apprehended this perplexity in *Lucifer*. And making himselfe sure of his owne entrance, and knowing well, that many thousands of his family aspired to that place, he opposed himselfe against all others. He was content they should bee damned, but not that they should governe. And though when hee died he was utterly ignorant in all great learning, and knew not so much as *Ptolomeys*, or *Copernicus* name, but might have beene perswaded, that the words *Almagest, Zenith*, and *Nadir*, were Saints names, and fit to bee put into the *Litanie*, and *Ora pro nobis* joyned to them; yet after hee had spent some time in hell, he had learnt somewhat of his *Jesuites*, which daily came thither. And whilst he staied at the threshold of *Hell*; that is, from the time when he delivered himselfe over to the Popes will, hee tooke a little taste of learning. Thus furnished, thus hee undertakes *Copernicus*. "Do you thinke to winne our *Lucifer* to your part, by allowing him the honour of being of the race of that starre? who was not onely made before all the starres, but being glutted with the glory of shining there, transferred his dwelling and Colonies unto this Monarchy, and thereby gave our Order a noble example, to spy, to invade, and to possesse forraine kingdomes. Can our *Lucifer*, or his followers have any honour from that starre *Lucifer*, which is but *Venus?* whose face how much wee scorne, appeares by this, that, for the most part we use her aversly and preposterously. Rather let our *Lucifer* glory in *Lucifer* the *Calaritan Bishop;* not therefore because he is placed amongst Heretiques, onely for affirming the propagation of the soule; but especially for this, that he was the first that opposed the dignity of Princes, and imprinted the names of *Antichrist, Judas,* and other stigmarique markes upon the *Emperour;* But for you, what new thing have you invented, by which our *Lucifer* gets anything? What cares hee whether the earth travell, or stand still? Hath your raising up of the earth into heaven, brought men to

that confidence, that they build new towers or threaten God againe? Or do they out of this motion of the earth conclude, that there is no hell, or deny the punishment of sin? Do not men beleeve? do they not live just, as they did before? Besides, this detracts from the dignity of your learning, and derogates from your right and title of comming to this place, that those opinions of yours may very well be true. If therfore any man have honour or title to this place in this matter, it belongs wholly to our *Clavius*, who opposed himselfe opportunely against you, and the truth, which at that time was creeping into every mans minde. Hee onely can be called the Author of all contentions, and schoole-combats in this cause; and no greater profit can bee hoped for heerein, but that for such brabbles, more necessarie matters bee neglected. And yet nor onely for this is our *Clavius* to bee *honoured,* but for the great paines also which hee tooke in the *Gregorian Calender,* by which both the peace of the Church, & Civill businesses have beene egregiously troubled: nor hath heaven it selfe escaped his violence, but hath ever since obeied his apointments: so that *S. Stephen, John Baptist*, & all the rest, which have bin commanded to worke miracles at certain appointed daies, where their Reliques are preserved, do not now attend till the day come, as they were accustomed, but are awaked ten daies sooner, and constrained by him to come downe from heaven to do that businesse; But your inventions can scarce bee called yours, since long before you, *Heraclides, Ecphantus, & Aristarchus* thrust them into the world: who notwithstanding content themselves with lower roomes amongst the other Philosophers, & aspire not to this place, reserved onely for *Antichristian Heroes:* neither do you agree so wel amongst yourselves, as that you can be said to have made a *Sect*, since, as you have perverted and changed the order and *Scheme* of others: so *Tycho Brachy* hath done by yours, and others by his. Let therefore this little *Mathematitian* (dread Emperour) withdraw himselfe to his owne company. And if heereafter the fathers of our Order can draw a *Cathedrall Decree* from the Pope, by which it may be defined as a matter of faith: *That the earth doth not move;* & an *Anathema* inflicted upon all which hold the contrary: then perchance both the Pope which shall dec'ree that, and *Copernicus* his followers, (if they be Papists) may have the dignity of this place." *Lucifer* signified his assent; and *Copernicus*, without muttering a word, was as quiet, as he thinks the sunne, when he which stood next him, entred into his place**. . . .**

. . . I came backe againe, to spie (if the gates were stil open) with what affection *Ignatius*, and they who were in auncient possession of that place, behaved themselves towardes one an other. And I found him yet in the porch, and there beginning a new contention: for having presently cast his eyes to the principall place, next to *Lucifers* owne *Throne,* and finding it possest, he stopt *Lucifer,* and asked him, who it was that sate there. It was answered, that it was *Pope Boniface*; to whom, as a principall Innovator, for having first chalenged the name of *Universall Bishop*, that honour was affoorded. Is he an Innovator thundred *Ignatius?* shall I suffer this, when all my Disciples have laboured all this while to prove to the world, that all the *Popes* before his time did use that name? And that *Gregory* did not reprehend the *Patriarch John* for taking to himselfe an Antichristian name, but for usurping a name which was due to none but the *Pope*. And could it be fit for you, *Lucifer*, (who in this were either unmindfull of the *Romane Church*, or else too weake and incapable of her secrets and mysteries) to give way to any sentence in *Hell*, which (though it were according to truth,) yet differed from the Jesuites *Oracles?* With this *Ignatius* flyes upwardes, and rushes upon *Boniface*, and throwes him out of his Seate: And *Lucifer* went up with him as fast, and gave him assistance, least, if hee should forsake him, his owne seate might bee endangered. And I returned to my body; which

As a flower wet with last nights dew, and then
Warm'd with the new Sunne, doth shake of agen
All drowsinesse, and raise his trembling Crowne,
Which crookedly did languish, and stoope downe
To kisse the earth, and panted now to finde
Those beames return'd, which had not long time shin'd,

was with this returne of my soule sufficiently refreshed. And when I had scene all this, and considered how fitly and proportionally *Rome & Hell* answered one another, after I had seene a Jesuit turne the *Pope* out of his *Chaire* in *Hell*, I suspected that that *Order* would attempt as much at *Rome*.

DEVOTIONS UPON EMERGENT OCCASIONS

This 1624 prose work was dedicated to the future King Charles I. It contains a series of reflections that were written as Donne recovered from a serious illness, believed to be either typhus or a relapsing fever. The work consists of twenty-three parts (titled as devotions) describing each stage of the sickness. Each part is further divided into a Meditation, an Expostulation and a Prayer. Of particular note is Meditation XVII, which is subtitled “Now, this bell tolling for another, says to me, thou must die”, in which Donne prepares himself for death. It also contains the famous saying, “No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main”.

Viri Seraphici Joannis Donne Dga
dragenavy Effigies vera, Qui post
eam abatum Sacris initiatus Ec=
clesiæ St. Pauli Decanus obiit.
Anno Dñi 1631°
Ætatis suæ 59°

An early frontispiece depicting Donne

CONTENTS

I. MEDITATION
II. MEDITATION
III. MEDITATION
IV. MEDITATION
V. MEDITATION
VI. MEDITATION
VII. MEDITATION
VIII. MEDITATION
IX. MEDITATION
X. MEDITATION
XI. MEDITATION
XII. MEDITATION
XIII. MEDITATION
XIV. MEDITATION
XV. MEDITATION
XVI. MEDITATION
XVII. MEDITATION
XVIII. MEDITATION
XIX. MEDITATION
XX. MEDITATION
XXI. MEDITATION
XXII. MEDITATION
XXIII. MEDITATION

I. MEDITATION

VARIABLE, and therfore miserable condition of Man; this minute I was well, and am ill, this minute. I am surpriz'd with a sodaine change, and alteration to worse, and can impute it to no cause, nor call it by any name. We study *Health*, and we deliberate upon our *meats*, and *drink*, and *ayre*, and *exercises*, and we hew, and wee polish every stone, that goes to that building; and so our *Health* is a long and regular work; But in a minute a Canon batters all, overthrowes all, demolishes all; a *Sicknes* unprevented for all our diligence, unsuspected for all our curiositie; nay, undeserved, if we consider only *disorder*, summons us, seizes us, possesses us, destroyes us in an instant. O miserable condition of Man, which was not imprinted by *God*, who as hee is *immortall* himselfe, had put a *coale*, a *beame* of *Immortalitie* into us, which we might have blowen into a *flame*, but blew it out, by our first sinne; wee beggard our selves by hearkning after false riches, and infatuated our selves by hearkning after false knowledge. So that now, we doe not onely die, but die upon the Rack, die by the torment of sicknesse; nor that onely, but are preafflicted, super-afflicted with these jelousies and suspitions, and apprehensions of *Sicknes*, before we can cal it a sicknes; we are not sure we are ill; one hand askes the other by the pulse, and our eye asks our urine, how we do. O multiplied misery! we die, and cannot enjoy death, because wee die in this torment of sicknes; we art tormented with sicknes, and cannot stay till the torment come, but preapprehensions and presages, prophecy those torments, which induce that *death* before either come; and our dissolution is conceived in these *first changes, quickned* in the *sicknes* it selfe, and *borne* in *death*, which beares date from these first changes. Is this the honour which Man hath by being a *litle world*, That he hath these *earthquakes* in him selfe, sodaine shakings; these *lightnings*, sodaine flashes; these *thunders*, sodaine noises; these *Eclypses*, sodain offuscations, and darknings of his senses; these *Blazing stars*, sodaine fiery exhalations; these *Rivers of blood*, sodaine red waters? Is he a *world* to himselfe onely therefore, that he hath inough in himself, not only to destroy, and execute himselfe, but to presage that execution upon himselfe; to assist the sicknes, to antidate the sicknes, to make the sicknes the more irremediable, by sad apprehensions, and as if he would make a fire the more

vehement, by sprinkling water upon the coales, so to wrap a hote fever in cold Melancholy, least the fever alone should not destroy fast enough, without this contribution nor perfit the work (which is *destruction*) except we joynd an artificiall sicknes, of our owne *melancholy*, to our natural, our unnaturall fever. O perplex'd discomposition, O ridling distemper, O miserable condition of Man!

II. MEDITATION

THE *Heavens* are not the less constant, because they move continually, because they move continually one and the same way. The *Earth* is not the more constant, because it lyes stil continually, because continually it changes, and melts in al parts thereof. *Man*, who is the noblest part of the *Earth*, melts so away, as if he were a *statue*, not of *Earth*, but of *Snowe*. We see his owne *Envie* melts him, he growes leane with that; he will say, anothers *beautie* melts him; but he feeles that a *Fever* doth not melt him like *snow*, but powr him out like *lead*, like *iron*, like *brasse* melted in a furnace: It doth not only *melt* him, but *calcine* him, reduce him to *Atomes*, and to *ashes*; not to *water*, but to *lime*. And how quickly? Sooner than thou canst receive an answer, sooner than thou canst conceive the question; *Earth* is the *center* of my *Bodie*, *Heaven* is the *center* of my *Soule*; these two are the naturall places of those two; but those goe not to these two in an equall pace: My *body* falls downe without pushing, my *Soule* does not go up without pulling: *Ascension* is my *Soules* pace and measure, but *precipitation* my *bodies:* And, even *Angells*, whose home is *Heaven*, and who are winged too, yet had a *Ladder* to goe to *Heaven*, by steps. The *Sunne* who goes so many miles in a minut, the *Starres* of the *Firmament*, which go so very many more, goe not so fast, as my *body* to the *earth*. In the same instant that I feele the first attempt of the disease, I feele the victory; In the twinckling of an eye, I can scarse see, instantly the tast is insipid, and fatuous; instantly the appetite is dull and desirelesse: instantly the knees are sinking and strengthlesse; and in an instant, sleepe, which is the *picture*, the *copie* of *death*, is taken away, that the *Originall, Death* it selfe may succeed, and that so I might have death to the life. It was part of *Adams* punishment, *In the sweat of thy browes thou shalt eate thy bread*: it is multiplied to me, I have earned bread in the sweat of my browes, in the labor of my calling, and I have it; and I sweat againe, and againe, from the brow, to the sole of the foot, but I eat no bread, I tast no sustenance: Miserable distribution of *Mankind*, where one halfe lackes meat, and the other stomacke.

III. MEDITATION

WEE attribute but one priviledge and advantage to Mans body, above other moving creatures, that he is not as others, groveling, but of an erect, of an upright form, naturally built, and disposed to the contemplation of *Heaven*. Indeed it is a thankfull forme, and recompences that *soule*, which gives it, with carrying that soule so many foot higher, towards *heaven*. Other creatures look to the *earth*; and even that is no unfit object, no unfit contemplation for *Man*; for thither hee must come; but because, *Man* is not to stay there, as other creatures are, *Man* in his naturall forme, is carried to the contemplation of that place, which is his *home, Heaven*. This is *Mans* prerogative; but what state hath he in this *dignitie?* A fever can fillip him downe, a fever can depose him; a fever can bring that head, which yesterday caried a *crown* of gold, five foot towards a *crown* of glory, as low as his own foot, today. When *God* came to breath into *Man* the breath of life, he found him flat upon the ground; when he comes to withdraw that breath from him againe, hee prepares him to it, by laying him flat upon his bed. Scarse any prison so close, that affords not the prisoner two, or three steps. The *Anchorites* that barqu'd themselves up in hollowe trees, and immur'd themselves in hollow walls; that perverse man, that barrell'd himselfe in a Tubb, all could stand, or sit, and enjoy some change of posture. A sicke bed, is a grave; and all that the patient saies there, is but a varying of his owne *Epitaph*. Every nights bed is a *Type* of the *grave:* At night wee tell our servants at what houre wee will rise; here we cannot tell our selves, at what day, what week, what moneth. Here the head lies as low as the foot; the *Head* of the people, as lowe as they, whome those feete trod upon; And that hande that signed Pardons, is too weake to begge his owne, if he might have it for lifting up that hand: Strange fetters to the feete, strange Manacles to the hands, when the feete, and handes are bound so much the faster, by how much the coards are slacker; So much the lesse able to doe their Offices, by how much more the Sinews and Ligaments are the looser. In the *Grave* I may speak through the stones, in the voice of my friends, and in the accents of those wordes, which their love may afford my memory; Here I am mine owne *Ghost,* and rather affright my beholders, than instruct them; they conceive the worst of me now, and yet feare worse; they give me for dead now, and yet wonder how I doe, when they wake at

midnight, and aske how I doe to morrow. Miserable and, (though common to all) inhuman *posture*, where I must practise my lying in the *grave*, by lying still, and not practise my *Resurrection*, by rising any more.

IV. MEDITATION

IT is too little to call *Man* a *little World*; Except *God*, Man is a *diminutive* to nothing. Man consistes of more pieces, more parts, than the world; than the world doeth, nay than the world is. And if those pieces were extended, and stretched out in Man, as they in the world, Man would bee the *Gyant*, and the Worlde the *Dwarfe*, the World but the *Map*, and the Man the *World*. If all the *Veines* in our bodies, were extended to *Rivers*, and all the *Sinewes*, to *Vaines of Mines*, and all the *Muscles*, that lye upon one another, to *Hilles*, and all the *Bones* to *Quarries* of stones, and all the other pieces, to the proportion of those which correspond to them in the world, the *Aire* would be too litle for this *Orbe* of Man to move in, the firmament would bee but enough for this *Starre*; for, as the whole world hath nothing, to which something in man doth not answere, so hath man many pieces, of which the whole world hath no representation. Inlarge this Meditation upon this *great world*, *Man*, so farr, as to consider the immensitie of the creatures this world produces; our *creatures* are our *thoughts*, *creatures* that are borne *Gyants*; that reach from *East* to *West*, from *Earth* to *Heaven*, that doe not onely bestride all the *Sea*, and *Land*, but span the *Sunnand Firmament* at once; My thoughts reach all, comprehend all. Inexplicable mistery; I their *Creator* am in a close prison, in a sicke bed, any where, and any one of my *Creatures*, my *thoughts*, is with the *Sunne*, and beyond the *Sunne*, overtakes the *Sunne*, and overgoes the *Sunne* in one pace, one steppe, everywhere. And then as the other *world* produces *Serpents*, and *Vipers*, malignant, and venimous creatures, and *Wormes*, and *Caterpillars*, that endeavour to devoure that world which produces them, and *Monsters* compiled and complicated of divers parents, and kinds, so this world, our selves, produces all these in us, in producing *diseases*, and *sicknesses*, of all those sort; venimous, and infectious diseases, feeding and consuming diseases, and manifold and entangled diseases, made up of many several ones. And can the other world name so many *venimous*, so many consuming, so many monstrous creatures, as we can diseases, of all these kindes? O miserable abundance, O beggarly riches! how much doe wee lacke of having *remedies* for everie disease, when as yet we have not *names* for them? But wee have a *Hercules* against these *Gyants*, these *Monsters*; that is, the *Phisician*; hee

musters up al the forces of the other world, to succour this; all Nature to relieve Man. We *have* the *Phisician*, but we *are not* the *Phisician*. Heere we shrinke in our proportion, sink in our dignitie, in respect of verie meane creatures, who are *Phisicians* to themselves. The *Hart* that is pursued and wounded, they say, knowes an Herbe, which being eaten, throwes off the arrow: A strange kind of *vomit*. The *dog* that pursues it, though hee bee subject to sicknes, even *proverbially*, knowes his *grasse* that recovers him. And it may be true, that the *Drugger* is as neere to *Man*, as to other *creatures*, it may be that obvious and present *Simples*, easie to be had, would cure him; but the *Apothecary* is not so neere him, nor the *Phisician* so neere him, as they two are to other creatures; Man hath not that *innate instinct*, to apply these naturall medicines to his present danger, as those inferiour creatures have; he is not his owne *Apothecary*, his owne *Phisician*, as they are. Call back therefore thy Meditation again, and bring it downe; whats become of mans great extent and proportion, when himselfe shrinkes himselfe, and consumes himselfe to a handfull of dust? whats become of his soaring thoughts, his compassing thoughts, when himselfe brings himselfe to the ignorance, to the thoughtlessnesse of the *Grave?* His *diseases* are his owne, but the *Phisician* is not; hee hath them at home, but hee must send for the *Phisician*.

V. MEDITATION

AS *Sicknes* is the greatest misery, so the greatest misery of sicknes, is *solitude*; when the infectiousnes of the disease deterrs them who should assist, from comming; even the *Phisician* dares scarse come. *Solitude* is a torment which is not threatned in *hell* it selfe. Meere *vacuitie,* the first *Agent, God,* the first *instrument* of *God, Nature,* will not admit; Nothing can be utterly *emptie,* but so neere a degree towards *Vacuitie,* as *Solitude,* to bee but one, they love not. When I am dead, and my body might infect, they have a remedy, they may bury me; but when I am but sick, and might infect, they have no remedy, but their absence, and my solitude. It is an *excuse* to them that are *great,* and pretend, and yet are loth to come; it is an *inhibition* to those who would truly come, because they may be made instruments, and pestiducts, to the infection of others, by their comming. And it is an *Outlawry,* an *Excommunication* upon the *Patient,* and seperats him from all offices not onely of *Civilitie,* but of *working Charitie*. A long sicknesse will weary friends at last, but a pestilentiall sicknes averts them from the beginning. *God* himself would admit a *figure* of *Society,* as there is a plurality of persons in *God,* though there bee but one *God*; and all his externall actions testifie a love of *Societie,* and *communion*. In *Heaven* there are *Orders* of *Angels,* and *Armies* of *Martyrs,* and *in that house, many mansions;* in *Earth, Families, Cities, Churches, Colleges,* all *plurall things;* and lest either of these should not be company enough alone, there is an association of both, a *Communion of Saints,* which makes the *Militant,* and *Triumphant Church,* one Parish; So that *Christ,* was not out of his *Dioces,* when hee was upon the *Earth,* nor out of his *Temple,* when he was in our flesh. *God,* who sawe that all that hee made, was good, came not so neer seeing a *defect* in any of his works, as when he saw that it was not good, for man to bee *alone,* therefore *hee made him a helper;* and one that should helpe him so, as to increase the *number,* and give him *her owne,* and *more societie*. *Angels* who do not propagate, nor multiply, were made at the first in an abundant number; and so were starres: But for the things of this world, their blessing was, *Encrease;* for I think, I need not aske leave to think, that there is no *Phenix;* nothing singular, nothing alone: Men that inhere upon *Nature* only, are so far from thinking, that there is anything

singular in this world, as that they will scarce thinke, that this world it selfe is *singular*, but that every *Planet*, and every *Starre*, is another *world* like this; They finde reason to conceive, not onely a *pluralitie* in every Species in the world, but a *pluralitie of worlds*; so that the abhorrers of *Solitude*, are not solitary; for *God*, and *Nature*, and *Reason* concurre against it. Now a man may counterfeyt the *Plague* in a *vowe*, and mistake a *Disease* for *Religion;* by such a retiring, and recluding of himselfe from all men, as to doe good to no man, to converse with no man. *God* hath two *Testaments*, two *Wils;* but this is a *Scedule*, and not of his, a *Codicill*, and not of his, not in the *body* of his *Testaments*, but *interlin'd*, and *postscrib'd* by others, that the way to the *Communion of Saints*, should be by such a *solitude*, as excludes all doing of good here. That is a *disease* of the *mind;* as the height of an infectious disease of the body, is *solitude*, to be left alone**:** for this makes an infectious bed, equall, nay worse than a *grave*, that thogh in both I be equally alone, in my bed I *know* it, and *feele* it, and shall not in my *grave:* and this too, that in my bedd, my soule is still in an infectious body, and shall not in my grave bee so.

VI. MEDITATION

I OBSERVE the *Phisician*, with the same diligence, as hee the *disease*; I see hee *feares*, and I feare with him: I overtake him, I overrun him in his feare, and I go the faster, because he makes his pace slow; I feare the more, because he disguises his fear, and I see it with the more sharpnesse, because hee would not have me see it. He knowes that his *feare* shall not disorder the practise, and exercise of his *Art*, but he knows that my *fear* may disorder the effect, and working of his practise. As the ill affections of the *spleene*, complicate, and mingle themselves with every infirmitie of the body, so doth *feare* insinuat it self in every *action* or *passion* of the *mind*; and as the *wind* in the body will counterfet any disease, and seem the *stone* and seem the *Gout*, so feare will counterfet any disease of the *Mind*; It shall seeme *love*, a love of having, and it is but a *fear*, a jealous, and suspitious feare of loosing; It shall seem *valor* in despising, and undervaluing danger, and it is but *feare*, in an overvaluing of *opinion*, and *estimation*, and a feare of loosing that. A man that is not afraid of a *Lion* is afraid of a *Cat*; not afraid of *starving*, and yet is afraid of some *joynt of meat* at the table, presented to feed him; not afraid of the sound of *Drummes*, and *Trumpets*, and *Shot*, and those, which they seeke to drowne, the last cries of men, and is afraid of some particular *harmonious instrument*; so much afraid, as that with any of these the *enemy* might drive this man, otherwise valiant enough, out of the field. I know not, what fear is, nor I know not what it is that I fear now; I feare not the hastening of my *death*, and yet I do fear the increase of the *disease*; I should belie *Nature*, if I should deny that I feared this, and if I should say that I feared *death*, I should belye *God*; My weaknesse is from *Nature*, who hath but her *Measure*, my strength is from *God*, who possesses, and distributes infinitely. As then every cold ayre, is not a *dampe*, every *shivering* is not a *stupefaction*, so every *feare*, is not a *fearefulnes*, every declination is not a running away, every debating is not a resolving, every wish, that it were not thus, is not a murmuring, nor a dejection though it bee thus; but as my *Phisicians* fear puts not him from his *practise*, neither doth mine put me, from receiving from *God*, and *Man*, and my *selfe*, *spirituall*, and *civill*, and *morall* assistances, and consolations.

VII. MEDITATION

THERE is *more feare*, therefore *more cause*. If the *Phisician* desire help, the burden grows great: There is a growth of the *Disease* then; But there must bee an *Autumne* to; But whether an *Autumne* of the *disease* or *mee*, it is not my part to choose: but if it bee of *mee*, it is of *both*; My disease cannot *survive mee*, I may *overlive* it. Howsoever, his desiring of others, argues his *candor*, and his *ingenuitie*; if the danger be *great*, he *justifies* his proceedings, and he *disguises* nothing, that calls in *witnesses;* And if the danger bee not *great*, hee is not *ambitious*, that is so readie to divide the thankes, and the honour of that work, which he begun alone, with others. It diminishes not the dignitie of a *Monarch*, that hee derive part of his care upon others; *God* hath not made many *Suns*, but he hath made many *bodies*, that *receive*, and *give* light. The *Romanes* began with one *King*; they came to *two Consuls;* they returned in extremities, to one Dictator: whether in *one*, or *many*, the *Soveraigntie* is the same, in all *States*, and the danger is not the more, and the providence is the more, where there are more *Phisicians*; as the State is the happier, where businesses are carried by more counsels, than can bee in one breast, how large soever. *Diseases* themselves hold *Consultations*, and conspire how they may multiply, and joyn with one another, and *exalt* one anothers force, so; and shal we not call *Phisicians*, to *consultations? Death* is in an olde mans dore, he appeares, and tels him so, and *death* is at a young mans *backe*, and saies nothing; *Age* is a *sicknesse*, and *Youth* is an *ambush*; and we need so many *Phisicians*, as may make up a *Watch*, and spie every inconvenience. There is scarce any thing, that hath not killed some body; a *haire*, a *feather* hath done it; Nay, that which is our best *Antidote* against it, hath donn it; the best *Cordiall* hath bene *deadly* poyson; Men have dyed of *Joy*, and allmost forbidden their friends to weepe for them, when they have seen them dye laughing. Even that Tiran *Dyonisius* (I thinke the same, that suffered so much after) who could not die of that sorrow, of that high fal, from a *King* to a *wretched private man*, dyed of so poore a *Joy*, as to be declard by the *people* at a *Theater*, that hee was a good *Poet*. We say often that a *Man may live of a litle*; but, alas, of how much lesse may a Man dye! And therfore the more assistants, the better; who comes to a day of hearing, in a cause of any importance, with one

Advocate? In our *Funerals*, we our selves have no interest; there wee cannot *advise*, we cannot *direct:* And though some *Nations*, (the *Egiptians* in particular) built themselves better *tombs*, than *houses* because they were to dwell *longer* in them; yet, amongst our selves, the greatest *Man of Stile*, whom we have had, *The Conqueror*, was left, as soone as his soule left him, not only without persons to assist at his *grave*, but without a grave. Who will keepe us then, we know not; As long as we can, let us admit as much *helpe* as wee can; Another, and another *Phisician*, is not another, and another *Indication*, and *Symptom* of *death*, but another, and another *Assistant*, and *Proctor* of *life:* Nor doe they so much feed the imagination with apprehension of *danger*, as the understanding with *comfort;* Let not one bring *Learning*, another *Diligence*, another *Religion*, but every one bring all, and, as many Ingredients enter into a Receit, so may many men make the Receit. But why doe I exercise my Meditation so long upon this, of having plentifull helpe in time of need? Is not my Meditation rather to be enclined another way, to condole, and commiserate their distresse who have *none?* How many are sicker (perchance) than I, and laid on their wofull straw at home (if that corner be a home) and have no more hope of helpe, though they die, than of preferment, though they live? Nor doe no more expect to see a *Phisician* then, than to bee an *Officer* after; of wkome, the first that takes knowledge, is the *Sexten* that buries them; who buries them in *oblivion* too? For they doe but fill up the number of the dead in the Bill, but we shall never heare their Names, till wee reade them in the Booke of life, with our owne. How many are sicker (perchance) than I, and thrown into *Hospitals*, where, (as a fish left upon the Sand, must stay the tide) they must stay the *Phisicians* houre of visiting, and then can bee but *visited?* How many are sicker (perchaunce) than all we, and have not this *Hospitall* to cover them, not this straw, to lie in, to die in, but have their *Grave-stone* under them, and breathe out then soules in the eares, and in the eies of passengers, harder than their bed, the flint of the street? That taste of no part of our *Phisick*, but a *sparing dyet;* to whom ordinary porridge would bee *Julip* enough, the refuse of our servants, *Bezar* enough, and the off-scouring of our Kitchen tables, *Cordiall* enough. O my *soule*, when thou art not enough awake, to blesse thy *God* enough for his plentifull mercy, in affoording thee many *Helpers*, remember how many lacke them, and helpe them to them, or to those other things, which they lacke as much as them.

VIII. MEDITATION

STILL when we return to that *Meditation,* that *Man* is a *World,* we find new *discoveries*. Let him be a *world,* and him self will be the *land,* and *misery* the *sea*. His misery (for misery is his, his own; of the happinesses of this world hee is but *Tenant*, but of misery the *Free-holder;* of happines he is but the *farmer*, but the *usufructuary*, but of misery, the *Lord*, the *proprietary*) his misery, as the *sea*, swells above all the hilles, and reaches to the remotest parts of this *earth*, *Man;* who of himselfe is but *dust,* and coagulated and kneaded into earth, by *teares;* his *matter* is *earth*, his *forme*, *misery*. In this *world*, that is *Mankinde*, the highest ground, the eminentest *hils*, are *Kings;* and have they line, and lead enough to fadome this *sea*, and say, My misery is but this deepe? Scarce any misery equal to *sicknesse;* and they are subject to that equally, with their lowest subject. A glasse is not the lesse brittle, because a *Kings* face is represented in it; nor a King the lesse brittle, because *God* is represented in him. They have *Phisicians* continually about them, and therfore *sicknesses,* or the worst of sicknesses, continuall feare of it. Are they *gods?* He that calld them so, cannot flatter. They are *Gods*, but *sicke gods;* and *God* is presented to us under many human affections, as far as *infirmities;* God is called *Angry*, and *Sorry*, and *Weary*, and *Heavy;* but never a *sicke God:* for then hee might *die* like men, as our *gods* do. The worst that they could say in reproch, and scorne of the *gods* of the *Heathen*, was, that perchance they were *asleepe;* but Gods that are so sicke, as that they cannot sleepe, are in an infirmer condition. A *God,* and need a Phisician? A *Jupiter* and need an *Æsculapius?* that must have *Rheubarbe* to purge his *choller*, lest he be too angry, and *Agarick* to purge his *flegme,* lest he be too drowsie; that as *Tertullian* saies of the *Ægyptian gods, plants* and *herbes, That God was beholden to Man, for growing in his Garden*, so wee must say of these gods, *Their eternity, (an eternity* of three score and ten yeares) is in the *Apothecaryes* shop, and not in the *Metaphoricall Deity*. But their *Deitye* is better expressed in their *humility*, than in their *heighth;* when abounding and overflowing, as *God*, in means of doing good, they descend, as *God*, to a communication of their abundances with men, according to their necessities, then they are *Gods*. No man is well, that understands not, that values not his being well; that hath

not a cheerefulnesse, and a joy in it; and whosoever hath this *Joy*, hath a desire to communicate, to propagate that, which occasions his happinesse, and his *Joy*, to others; for every man loves witnesses of his happinesse; and the best witnesses, are experimentall witnesses; they who have tasted of that in themselves, which makes us happie: It consummates therefore, it perfits the happinesse of *Kings*, to confer, to transfer, honor, and riches, and (as they can) health, upon those that need them.

IX. MEDITATION

THEY have seene me, and heard mee, arraign'd mee in these fetters, and receiv'd the *evidence;* I have cut up mine *Anatomy*, dissected my selfe, and they are gon to *read* upon me. O how manifold, and perplexed a thing, nay, how wanton and various a thing is *ruine* and *destruction!* God presented to *David* three kinds, *War, Famine*, and *Pestilence; Satan* left out these, and brought in, *fires from heaven*, and *windes from the wilderness*. [As] if there were no *ruine* but *sickness* wee see, the Masters of that *Art*, can scarce *number*, nor *name* all sicknesses; every thing that *disorders* a faculty, and the function of that is a sicknesse: The names wil not serve them which are given from the *place affected*, the *Plurisie* is so; nor from the *effect* which it works, the *falling sicknes* is so; they cannot have names enow, from *what it does*, nor *where it is*, but they must extort names from what *it is like*, what it *resembles*, and but in some one thing, or els they would lack names; for the *Wolf*, and the *Canker*, and the *Polypus* are so; and that question, *whether there be more names or things*, is as perplexd in sicknesses, as in any thing else; except it be easily resolvd upon that side, that there are more *sicknesses* than *names*. If *ruine* were reduc'd to that one way, that Man could perish noway but by *sickness* yet his danger were infinit; and if *sicknes* were reduc'd to that one way, that there were no *sicknes* but a *fever*, yet the way were infinite still; for it would overrode, and oppress any naturall, disorder and discompose any artificiall *Memory*, to deliver the *names* of severall *fevers;* how intricate a worke then have they, who are gone to *consult*, which of these *sicknesses* mine is, and then which of these *fevers*, and then what it would do, and then how it may be countermand. But even in *ill*, it is a degree of *good*, when the *evil* wil admit *consultation*. In many *diseases*, that which is but an *accident*, but a *symptom* of the main *disease*, is so violent, that the *Phisician* must attend the cure of that, though hee pretermit (so far as to intermit) the cure of the *disease* it self. Is it not so in *States* too? somtimes the insolency of those that are great, put[s] the people into *commotions;* the great disease, and the reatest danger to the *Head*, is the *insolency of the great ones;* and yet, they execute *Martial law*, they come to present executions upon the people, whose commotion was indeed but a *symptom*, but an *accident* of the maine *disease;* but this

sympton, grown so violent, would allow no, time for a *consultation*. Is it not so in the accidents of the *diseases* of our *mind* too? Is it not evidently so in our *affections*, in our *passions?* If a *cholerick* man be ready to strike, must I goe about to puree his *choler*, or to breake the blow? But where there is room for *consultation*, things are not desperate. They *consult;* so there is nothing *rashly, inconsideratly* done; and then they *prescribe*, they *write*, so there is nothing *covertly, disguisedly, unavowedly* done. In *bodily diseases* it is not alwaies so; sometimes, as soon as the *Phisicians* foote is in the *chamber*, his *knife* is in the patients *arme;* the disease would not allow a *minutes* forbearing of *blood*, nor *prescribing* of other remedies. In States and matter of government it is so too; they are somtimes surprizd with such *accidents*, as that the *Magistrat* asks not what may be done by *law*, but does that, which must *necessarily* be don in that case. But it is a degree of *good*, in *evill*, a degree that carries hope and comfort in it, when we may have recourse to that which is *written*, and that the proceedings may be apert, and ingenuous, and candid, and avowable, for that gives satisfaction, and acquiescence. They who have received my *Anatomy* of my selfe, *consult*, and end their *consultation* in *prescribing*, and in prescribing *Phisick*; proper and convenient remedy: for if they should come in again, and chide mee, for some disorder, that had occasioned, and inducd, or that had hastned and exalted this *sickness* or if they should begin to write now rules for my *dyet*, and *exercise* when I were well, this were to *antidate*, or to *postdate* their *Consultation*, not to give *Phisicke*. It were rather a vexation, than a reliefe, to tell a condemnd prisoner, you might have liv'd if you had done this; and if you can get pardon, you shal do wel, to take this, or this course hereafter. I am glad they know (I have hid nothing from them) glad they consult, (they hide nothing from one another) glad they write (they hide nothing from the world) glad that they write and prescribe *Phisick*, that there are *remedies* for the present case.

X. MEDITATION

THIS is *Natures nest of Boxes;* The Heavens containe the *Earth*, the *Earth*, *Cities, Cities, Men*. And all these are *Concentrique;* the common center to them all, is decay, ruine; only that is Eccentrique, which was never made; only that place, or garment rather, which we can *imagine*, but not *demonstrate*, That light, which is the very emanation of the light of *God*, in which the *Saints* shall dwell, with which the Saints shall .be appareld, only that bends not to this *Center*, to *Ruine;* that which was not made of *Nothing*, is not threatned with this annihilation. All other things are; even *Angels*, even our *soules;* they move upon the same *poles*, they bend to the same *Center;* and if they were not made immortall by *preservation*, their *Nature* could not keep them from sinking to this *center, Annihilation*. In all these (the *frame of the heavens*, the *States upon earth*, and *Men in them*, comprehend all) Those are the greatest mischifs, which are least discerned, the most insensible in their *wayes* come to bee the most sensible in their *ends*. The *Heavens* have had their *Dropsie*, they drownd the world, and they shall have their *Fever*, and burn the world. Of the *dropsie*, the flood, the world had a foreknowledge yeares before it came; and so some made provision against it, and were saved; the *fever* shall break out in an instant, and consume all; The *dropsie* did no harm to the *heavens*, from whence it fell, it did not put out those *lights*, it did not quench those *heates;* but the *fever*, the fire shall burne the *furnace* it selfe, annihilate those *heavens*, that breath it out; Though the *Dog-Starre* have a pestilent breath, an infectious exhalation, yet because we know when it wil rise, we clothe our selves, and wee diet our selves, and we shadow our selves to a sufficient prevention; but *Comets* and *blazing starres*, whose effects, or significations no man can interrupt or frustrate no man foresaw: no *Almanack* tells us, when a *blazing starre* will break out, the matter is carried up in secret; no *Astrologer* tels us when the effects will be accomplished, for thats a secret of a higher spheare, than the other; and that which is most *secret*, is most *dangerous*. It is so also here in the *societies* of men, in *States*, and *Commonwealths*. Twentie *rebellious drums* make not so dangerous a noise, as a few *whisperers*, and secret plotters in corners. The *Canon* doth not so much hurt against a wal, as a *Myne* under the wall; nor a thousand enemies that threaten, so much as

a few that take an *oath* to say *nothing*. God knew many heavy sins of the people, in the wildernes and after, but still he charges them with that one, with *Murmuring, murmuring* in their *hearts*, secret disobediences, secret repugnances against his declar'd wil; and these are the most deadly, the most pernicious. And it is so too, with the *diseases* of the *body;* and that is my case. The *pulse*, the *urine*, the *sweat*, all have sworn to say nothing, to give no *Indication*, of any dangerous *sicknesse*. My forces are not enfeebled, I find no decay in my strength; my provisions are not cut off, I find no abhorring in mine appetite; my counsels are not corrupted or infatuated, I find no false apprehensions, to work upon mine understanding; and yet they see, that invisibly, and I feele, that insensibly the *disease* prevailes. The *disease* hath established a *Kingdome*, an *Empire* in mee, and will have certaine *Arcana Imperii*, *secrets of State*, by which it will proceed, and not be bound to *declare* them. But yet against those secret conspiracies in the State, the *Magistrate* hath the *rack*; and against the insensible diseases, *Phisicians* have their *examiners;* and those these employ now.

XI. MEDITATION

WHENCE can wee take a better argument, a clearer demonstration, that all the *Greatnes* of this world, is built upon *opinion* of others, and hath in itself no *reall being*, nor power of subsistence, than from the *heart of man?* It is always in *action*, and *motion*, still busie, still pretending to doe all, to furnish all the powers, and faculties with all that they have; But if an enemy dare rise up against it, it is the soonest endangered, the soonest defeated of any part. The *Braine* will hold out longer than it, and the *Liver* longer than that; They will endure a *Siege;* but an unnatural heat, a rebellious heat, will blow up the *heart*, like a *Myne*, in a *minute*. But howsoever, since the *Heart* hath the *birthright* and *Primogeniture*, and that it is *Natures eldest Sonne* in us, the part which is first borne to life in man, and that the other parts, as *younger brethren*, and servants in this family, have a dependence upon it, it is reason that the principall care hee had of it, though it bee not the strongest part; as the *eldest* is oftentimes not the strongest of the family. And since the *Braine*, and *Liver*, and *Heart*, hold not a *Triumvirate in Man*, a *Soveraigntie* equally shed upon them all, for his *well-being*, as the foure *Elements* doe, for his very *being*, but the *Heart* alone is in the *Principalitie*, and in the *Throne*, as *King*, the rest as *Subjects*, though in eminent *Place* and *Office*, must contribute to that, as *Children* to their *Parents*, as all persons to all kinds of *Superiours*, though oftentimes, those *Parents*, or those *Superiours*, bee not of stronger parts, than themselves, that serve and obey them that are weaker; Neither doth this Obligation fall upon us, by second *Dictates of Nature*, by *Consequences* and *Conclusions* arising out of *Nature*, or deriv'd from *Nature*, by *Discourse*, (as many things binde us even by the Law of *Nature*, and yet not by the *primarie* Law of *Nature;* as all Lawes of *Proprietie* in that which we possesses are of the Law of *Nature*, which law is, *To give every one his owne*, and yet in the *primarie* law of Nature there was no *Proprietie*, no *Meum* and *Tuum*, but an universall *Communitie* over all; So the Obedience of *Superiours*, is of the law of *Nature*, and yet in the *primarie* law of *Nature*, there was no *Superioritie*, no *Magistracie;*) but this contribution of assistance of all to the *Soveraigne*, of all parts to the *Heart*, is from the very *first dictates of Nature;* which is, in the first place, to have care of our owne *Preservation*,

to look first to ourselves; for therefore doth the *Phisician*, intermit the present care of *Braine*, or *Liver*, because there is a possibilitie that they may subsist, though there bee not a present and a particular care had of them, but there is no possibilitie that they can subsist, if the *Heart* perish: and so, when we seem to begin with others, in such assistances, indeed wee doe beginne with ourselves, and wee ourselves are principally in our contemplation; and so all these officious, and mutual assistances are but *complements* towards others, and our true end is *ourselves*. And this is the reward of the paines of *Kings;* sometimes they neede the power of law, to be obey'd; and when they seeme to be obey'd *voluntarily*, they who doe it, doe it for their owne sakes. O how little a thing is all the *greatnes of man*, and through how false glasses doth he make shift to *multiply it*, and *magnifie* it to himselfe! And yet this is also another misery of this *King of man*, the *Heart*, which is also applyable to the Kings of this world, great men, that the venime and poyson of every pestilentiall disease directs itself to the *Heart*, affects that (pernicious affection,) and the *Malignity* of ill men, is also directed upon the *greatest*, and the *best;* and not only *greatnesse*, but *goodnesse* looses the vigour of beeing an *Antidote*, or *Cordiall* against it. And as the noblest, and most generous *Cordialls* that *Nature* or *Art* afford, or can prepare, if they be often taken, and made *familiar*, become no *Cordialls*, nor have any extraordinary operation, so the greatest *Cordiall* of the *Heart*, patience, if it bee much exercis'd, exalts the *venim* and the *malignity* of the *Enemy*, and the more we suffer, the more wee are insulted upon. When *God* had made this *Earth* of *nothing* it was but a little helpe, that he had, to make other things of this *Earth:* nothing can be neerer nothing, than this *Earth;* and yet how little of this *Earth* is the *greatest Man;* Hee thinkes he treads upon the *Earth*, that all is under his feete, and the *Braine* that thinkes so, is but *Earth;* his highest Region, the flesh that covers that, is but *earth;* and even the toppe of that, that, wherein so many *Absolons* take so much pride, is but a bush growing upon that *Turfe of Earth*. How little of the world is the *Earth!* And yet that is all that *Man hath*, or *is*. How little of a *Man* is the *Heart*, and yet it is all, by which he *is;* and this continually subject, not only to forraine poysons, conveyed by others, but to intestine poysons, bred in ourselves by pestilentiall sicknesses. O who, if before hee had a beeing, he could have sense of this miserie, would buy a being here upon these conditions?

XII. MEDITATION

WHAT will not kill a man if a *vapor* will? How great an *Elephant*, how small a *Mouse* destroys! To dye by a *bullet* is the *Souldiers dayly bread;* but few men dye by *haile-shot:* A man is more worth, than to bee sold for *single money;* a *life* to be valued above a *trifle*. If this were a violent shaking of the Ayre by *Thunder*, or by *Canon*, in that case the *Ayre* is condensed above the thicknesse of *water*, of *water* baked into *Ice*, almost *petrified*, almost made stone, and no wonder that kills; but that that which is but a *vapor*, and a *vapor* not forced, but breathed, should kill, that our *Nourse* should overlay us, and *Ayre* that nourishes us, should destroy us, but that it is a *halfe Atheisme* to murmure against *Nature*, who is *Gods immediate commissioner*, who would not think himselfe miserable to bee put into the hands of *Nature*, who does not only set him up for a *marke* for others to shoote at, but delights herselfe to blow him up like a glasse, till shee see him breake, even with her owne breath? nay, if this infectious *vapor* were sought for, or travail'd to, as *Plinie* hunted after the *vapor* of Ætna, and dared and challenged *Death*, in the forme of a vapor, to doe his worst, and felt the worst, he dyed; or if this *vapor* were met withall in an *ambush*, and we surprised with it, out of a long shutt *Well*, or out of a new opened *Myne*, who would lament, who would accuse, when we had nothing to accuse, none to lament against but *Fortune*, who is lesse than a *vapor:* But when our selves are the *Well*, that breaths out this exhalation, the *Oven* that spits out this fiery smoke, the *Myne* that spues out this suffocating, and strangling *dampe*, who can ever after this, aggravate his sorrow, by this *Circumstance*, That it was his *Neighbor*, his *familiar Friend*, his *Brother*, that destroyed him, and destroyed him with a whispering, and a calumniating breath, when wee our selves doe it to our selves by the same meanes, kill our selves with our owne *vapors?* Or if these occasions of this selfe-destruction, had any contribution from our owne *Wils*, any assistance from our owne *intentions*, nay from our own *errors*, we might divide the rebuke, and chide our selves as much as them. *Fevers* upon wilful distempers of drinke, and surfets, *Consumptions* upon intemperances, and licentiousness *Madnes* upon misplacing, or overbending our naturall faculties, proceed from our selves, and so, as that our selves are in the plot,

and wee are not onely *passive*, but *active* too, to our owne destruction; But what have I done, either to *breed*, or to *breath* these *vapors?* They tell me it is my *Melancholy;* Did I infuse, did I drinke in *Melancholly* into my selfe? It is my *thoughtfulnesse;* was I not made to *thinke?* It is my *study;* doth not my *Calling* call for that? I have don nothing, wilfully, perversly toward it, yet must suffer in it, die by it; There are too many *Examples* of men, that have bin their own *executioners*, and that have made hard shift to bee so; some have alwayes had *poyson* about them, in a *hollow ring* upon their finger, and some in their *Pen* that they used to write with: some have beat out their *braines* at the wal of their prison, and some have eate the *fire* out of their chimneys: and one is said to have come neerer our case than so, to have strangled himself, though his hands were bound, by crushing his throat between his knees; But I doe nothing upon my selfe, and yet am mine owne *Executioner*. And we have heard of *death* upon small occasions, and by *scornefull instruments:* a *pinne*, a *combe*, a *haire*, pulled, hath gangred, and killd; But when I have said, a *vapour*, if I were asked again, what is a *vapour*, I could not tell, it is so insensible a thing; so neere *nothing* is that that reduces us to *nothing*. But extend this *vapour*, rarifie it; from so narow a roome, as our *Naturall bodies*, to any *Politike body*, to a *State*. That which is *fume* in us, is in a *State*, *Rumor*, and these *vapours* in us, which wee consider here pestilent and infectious fumes, are in a State *infectious rumors*, detracting and dishonourable *Calumnies, Libels*. The *Heart* in that *body* is the *King;* and the *Braine*, his *Councell;* and the whole *Magistracie*, that ties all together, is the *Sinewes*, which proceed from thence; and the *life* of all is *Honour*, and just *respect*, and due *reverence;* and therfore, when these *vapors*, these venimous *rumors*, are directed against these *Noble parts*, the whole body suffers. But yet for all their priviledges, they are not priviledged from our *misery;* that as the *vapours* most pernitious to us, arise in our owne bodies, so do the most dishonorable *rumours*, and those that wound a State most, arise at home. What ill *ayre*, that I could have met in the street, what *Channell*, what *Shambles*, what *Dunghill*, what *vault*, could have hurt mee so much, as these home-bredd *vapours?* What *Fugitive*, what *Almes-man of any forraine State*, can doe so much harme as a *Detracter*, a *Libeller*, a scornefull *Jester* at home? For, as they that write of *poysons*, and of creatures naturally disposed to the ruine of Man, do as well mention the *Flea*, as the *Viper*, because the *Flea*, though hee kill none, hee does all the

harme hee can; so even these libellous and licentious *Jesters* utter the venim they have, though sometimes *vertue*, and alwaies *power*, be a good *Pigeon* to draw this *vapor* from the *Head*, and from doing any deadly harme there.

XIII. MEDITATION

WEE say, that the world is made of *sea*, and *land*, as though they were equal; but we know that ther is more *sea* in the *Western*, than in the *Eastern Hemisphere:* We say that the *Firmament* is full of *starres*, as though it were equally full; but we know, that there are more *stars* under of the *Northerne*, than under the *Southern Pole*. We say, the *Elements* of man are man are *misery*, and *happinesse*, as though he had an equal proportion of both, and the dayes of man vicissitudinary, as though he had as many *good* daies, as *ill*, and that he liv'd under a perpetuall *Equinoctial night*, and *day* equall, good and ill fortune in the same measure. But it is far from that; hee *drinkes misery*, and he *tastes happinesse;* he *mowes misery*, and he *gleanes happinesse;* he *journies in misery*, he does but *walke in happinesse;* and which is worst his misery is *positive*, and *dogmaticall*, his happinesse is but *disputable* and *problematicall;* All men call *Misery, Misery*, but Happinesse changes the name, by the taste of man. In this *accident* that befalls mee now, that this sicknesse declares itself by *Spots*, to be a malignant, and pestilentiall disease, if there be a *comfort* in the declaration, that therby the *Phisicians* see more cleerely what to doe, there may bee as much *discomfort* in this, That the malignitie may bee so great, as that all that they can doe, shall doe *nothing;* That an enemy *declares* himselfe: then, when he is able to subsist, and to pursue, and to atchive his ends, is no great comfort. In intestine Conspiracies, *voluntary Confessions* doe more good, than Confessions upon the *Rack;* in these Infections, when *Nature* her selfe confesses, and cries out by these outward declarations, which she is able to put forth of her selfe, they minister *comfort;* but when all is by strength of *Cordials*, it is but a *Confession upon the Racke*, by which though wee come to knowe the malice of that man, yet wee doe not knowe whether there bee not as much malice in his heart then, as before his confession; we are sure of his *Treason*, but not of his *Repentance;* sure of *him*, but not of *his Complices*. It is a faint comfort to know the worst, when the worst is *remedilesse;* and a weaker than that, to know *much ill*, and not to know, that that is the worst. A woman is comforted with the birth of her *Son*, her body is eased of a burthen; but if shee could *prophetically* read his *History*, how *ill a man*, perchance how *ill a sonne*, he would prove, shee should receive a

greater burthen into her *Mind*. Scarce any purchase that is not clogged with secret *encumbrances;* scarce any *happines* that hath not in it so much of the *nature* of false and base money, as that the *Allay* is more than the *Metall*. Nay, is it not so, (at least much towards it) even in the exercise of *Vertues?* I must bee poore, and want, before I can exercise the vertue of *Gratitude;* miserable, and in torment, before I can exercise the vertue of *patience;* How deepe do we dig, and for how coarse gold? And what other *Touchstone* have we of our *gold*, but *comparison?* Whether we be as happy, as others, or as ourselves at other times; O poore stepp toward being well, when these *spots* do only tell us, that we are worse, than we were sure of before.

XIV. MEDITATION

I WOULD not make *Man* worse than hee is, Nor his Condition more miserable than it is. But could I though I would? As a man cannot *flatter God*, nor over prayse him, so a man cannot *injure* Man, nor undervalue him. Thus much must necessarily be presented to his remembrance, that those *false Happinesses*, which he hath in this World, have their *times*, and their *seasons*, and their *critical dayes*, and they are *Judged*, and *Denominated* according to the times, when they befall us. What poore *Elements* are our *happinesses* made of, if *Tyme*, *Tyme* which wee can scarce consider to be *any thing*, be an essential part of our happines! All things are done in some *place;* but if we consider *Place* to be no more, but the next hollow *Superficies* of the *Ayre, Alas*, how thinne, and fluid a thing is *Ayre*, and how thinne a filme is a *Superficies*, and a *Superficies* of *Ayre!* All things are done in *time* too; but if we consider *Tyme* to be but the *Measure of Motion*, and howsoever it may seeme to have three *stations*, *past, present*, and *future*, yet the *first* and *last* of these are *not* (one is not, now, and the other is not yet) and that which you call *present*, is not *now* the same that it was, when you began to call it so in this *Line*, (before you sound that word, *present*, or that *Monosyllable*, *now*, the present, and the *Now* is past), if this *Imaginary halfe-nothing*, *Tyme*, be of the Essence of our *Happinesses*, how can they be thought *durable? Tyme* is not so; How can they bee thought to be? *Tyme* is not so; not so, considered in any of the *parts* thereof. If we consider *Eternity*, into that, *Tyme* never entred; *Eternity* is not an everlasting flux of *Tyme;* but *Tyme* is a short *parenthesis* in a longe *period;* and Eternity had been the same, as it is, though time had never beene; If we consider, not *Eternity*, but *Perpetuity*, not that which had no *Tyme* to beginne in, but which shall outlive *Tyme* and be, *when Tyme shall bee no more*, what *A Minute* is the life of the Durablest *Creature*, compared to that! And what a Minute is Mans life in respect of the *Sunnes*, or of a Tree! and yet how little of our *life* is *Occasion*, *opportunity* to receyve good in; and how litle of that *occasion*, doe wee apprehend, and lay hold of! How busie and perplexed a *Cobweb*, is the *Happinesse* of Man here, that must bee made up with a *Watchfulnesse*, to lay hold upon *Occasion*, which is but a little peece of that, which is *Nothing, Tyme!* And yet the best things are *Nothing* without that.

Honors, Pleasures, Possessions, presented to us, out of time, in our decrepit, and distasted, and unapprehensive *Age*, loose their *Office*, and loose their *Name;* They are not *Honors* to us, that shall never appeare, nor come abroad into the Eyes of the people, to receive *Honor*, from them who give it: Nor *pleasures* to us, who have lost our sense to taste them; nor *possessions* to us, who are departing from the possession of them. *Youth is their Criticall Day;* that *Judges* them, that *Denominates* them, that *inanimates*, and *informes* them, and makes them *Honors*, and *Pleasures*, and *Possessions;* and when they come in an unapprehensive *Age*, they come as a *Cordial* when the bell rings out, as a *Pardon*, when the Head is off. We rejoyce in the Comfort of *fire*, but does any man cleave to it at *Midsomer;* Wee are glad of the freshnesse, and coolenes of a *Vault*, but does any man keepe his *Christmas* there; or are the pleasures of the *Spring* acceptable in *Autumne?* If happinesse be in the *season*, or in the *Clymate*, how much happier then are *Birdes* than *Men*, who can change the *Climate*, and accompanies and enjoy the same season ever.

XV. MEDITATION

NATURALL men have conceived a twofold use of *sleepe;* That it is a *refreshing* of the body in this life; That it is a *preparing* of the soule for the next; That it is a *feast*, and it is the *grace* at that *feast;* That it is our *recreation*, and cheeres us, and it is our *Catechisme* and instructs us; wee lie downe in a hope, that wee shall rise the stronger; and we lie downe in a knowledge, that wee may rise no more. *Sleepe* is an *Opiate* which gives us rest, but such an *Opiate*, as perchance, being under it, we shall wake no more. But though naturall men, who have induced secondary and figurative considerations, have found out this second, this *emblematicall* use of *sleepe*, that it should be a *representation of death, God*, who wrought and perfected his worke, before *Nature* began, (for *Nature* was but his *Apprentice*, to learne in the first *seven daies*, and now is his *foreman*, and works next under him) *God*, I say, intended *sleepe* onely for the *refreshing* of man by bodily rest, and not for a *figure of death*, for he intended not death it *selfe* then. But *Man* having induced *death* upon himselfe, *God* hath taken *Mans Creature*, *death*, into his hand, and mended it; and whereas it hath in itselfe a fearefull forme and aspect, so that Man is afraid of his own *Creature, God* presents it to him, in a *familiar*, in an *assiduous*, in an *agreeable* and *acceptable* forme, in *sleepe*, that so when hee awakes from *sleepe*, and saies to himselfe, shall I bee no otherwise when I am dead, than I was even now, when I was asleep, hee may bee ashamed of his waking *dreames*, and of his *Melancholique* fancying out a horrid and an affrightfull figure of that *death* which is so like sleepe. As then wee need *sleepe* to live out our *threescore and ten yeeres*, so we need *death*, to live that life which we cannot *out-live*. And as *death* being our *enemie*, God allowes us to defend ourselves against it (for wee *victuall* ourselves against death, *twice* every day, as often as we *eat*) so *God* having so sweetned *death* unto us as hee hath in *sleepe*, wee put ourselves into our *enemies* hands *once* every day; so farre, as *sleepe* is *death;* and sleepe is as much death, as *meat* is *life*. This then is the *misery* of my *sicknesse*, That death as it is produced from mee, and is mine owne *Creature*, is now before mine *Eyes*, but in that forme, in which *God* hath mollified it to us, and made it acceptable, in *sleepe*, I cannot see it: how many *prisoners*, who have even hollowed themselves their *graves* upon that

Earth, on which they have lien long under heavie fetters, yet at this *houre* are *asleepe*, though they bee yet working upon their owne *graves* by their owne *waight!* Hee that hath seene his *friend* die to day, or knowes hee shall see it to *morrow*, yet will sinke into a sleepe betweene. I cannot; and oh, if I be entring now into *Eternitie*, where there shall bee no more distinction of *houres*, why is it al my businesse now *to tell Clocks?* why is none of the heavinesse of my *heart*, dispensed into mine *Eye-lids*, that they might fall as my heart doth? And why, since I have lost my delight in all objects, cannot I discontinue the facultie of seeing them, by closing mine *eyes* in *sleepe?* But why rather being entring into that presence, where I shall wake continually and never sleepe more, doe I not interpret MY continuall waking here, to bee a *parasceve*, and a *preparation* to that?

XVI. MEDITATION

WE have a *Convenient Author*, who writ a *Discourse of Bells*, when hee was prisoner in *Turky*. How would hee have enlarged himselfe if he had beene my *fellow-prisoner* in this *sicke bed*, so neere to that *Steeple*, which never ceases, no more than the *harmony of the spheres*, but is more heard. When the *Turkes* took *Constantinople*, they melted the *Bells* into *Ordnance;* I have heard both *Bells* and *Ordnance*, but never been so much affected with those, as with these *Bells*. I have *lien* near a *Steeple*, in which there are said to be more than *thirty Bels;* And neere another, where there is one so bigge, as that the *Clapper* is said to weigh more than *six hundred pound*, yet never so affected as here. Here the *Bells* can scarse solemnise the funerall of any person, but that I knew him, or knew that he was my *Neighbour:* we dwelt in houses neere to one another before, but now hee is gone into that house, into which I must follow him. There is a way of correcting the *Children* of great persons, that other *Children* are corrected in their *behalfe*, and in their *names*, and this workes upon them, who indeed had more deserved it. And when these *Bells* tell me, that now one, and now another is buried, must not I acknowledge, that they have the *correction* due to me, and paid the *debt* that I owe? There is a story of a *Bell* in a *Monastery* which, when any of the house was sicke to death, rung alwaies *voluntarily*, and they knew the inevitablenesse of the danger by that. It rung once, when no man was sick; but the next day one of the house, fell from the *steeple*, and died, and the *Bell* held the reputation of a *Prophet* still. If these *Bells* that warne to a *Funerall* now, were appropriated to none, may not I, by the houre of the *Funerall*, supply? How many men that stand at an *execution*, if they would aske, for what dies that man, should heare their owne faults condemned, and see themselves executed, by *Atturney?* We scarce heare of any man *preferred*, but wee thinke of our selves, that wee might very well have beene that *Man;* Why might not I have beene that *Man*, that is carried to his grave now? Could I fit my selfe, to *stand*, or sit in any mans *place*, and not to lie in any mans *grave?* I may lacke much of the *good parts* of the meanest, but I lacke nothing of the *mortality* of the weakest; They may have acquired better *abilities* than I, but I was borne to as many *infirmities* as they. To be an *Incumbent* by lying down in a *grave*, to be a *Doctor* by

teaching *Mortification* by *Example*, by *dying*, though I may have *seniors*, others may be *elder* than I, yet I have proceeded apace in a good *University*, and gone a great way in a little time, by the furtherance of a vehement *Fever;* and whomsoever these *Bells* bring to the ground to day, if hee and I had beene compared yesterday, perchance I should have been thought likelier to come to this preferment, then, than he. *God* hath kept the power of *death* in his owne hands, lest any man should *bribe death*. If man knew the *gaine of death*, the *ease of death*, he would solicite, he would provoke *death* to assist him, by any hand, which he might use. But as when men see many of their owne professions preferd, it ministers a hope that that may light upon them; so when these hourely *Bells* tell me of so many *funerals* of men like me, it presents, if not a *desire* that it may, yet a *comfort* whensoever mine shall come.

XVII. MEDITATION

NUNC LENTO SONITU DICUNT, MORIERIS.
Now this bell tolling softly for another,
says to me, Thou must die.

PERCHANCE he for whom this bell tolls may be so ill as that he knows not it tolls for him. And perchance I may think myself so much better than I am, as that they who are about me, and see my state, may have caused it to toll for me, and I know not that. The church is catholic, universal, so are all her actions; all that she does, belongs to all. When she baptizes a child, that action concerns me; for that child is thereby connected to that head which is my head too, and ingraffed into that body, whereof I am a member. And when she buries a man, that action concerns me; all mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated; God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again, for that library where every book shall lie open to one another; as therefore the bell that rings to a sermon, calls not upon the preacher only, but upon the congregation to come; so this bell calls us all: but how much more me, who am brought so near the door by this sickness.

There was a contention as far as a suit (in which, piety and dignity, religion and estimation, were mingled) which of the religious orders should ring to prayers first in the morning; and it was determined, that they should ring first that rose earliest. If we understand aright the dignity of this bell, that tolls for our evening prayer, we would be glad to make it ours, by rising early, in that application, that it might be ours as well as his, whose indeed it is. The bell doth toll for him, that thinks it doth; and though it intermit again, yet from that minute, that that occasion wrought upon him, he is united to God. Who casts not up his eye to the sun when it rises? But who takes off his eye from a comet, when that breaks out? who bends not his ear to any bell, which upon any occasion rings? But who can remove it from that bell, which is passing a piece of himself out of this world?

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is

the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

Neither can we call this a begging of misery, or a borrowing of misery, as though we were not miserable enough of ourselves, but must fetch in more from the next house, in taking upon us the misery of our neighbors. Truly it were an excusable covetousness if we did; for affliction is a treasure, and scarce any man hath enough of it. No man hath afflicion enough, that is not matured and ripened by it, and made fit for God by that affliction. If a man carry treasure in bullion or in a wedge of gold, and have none coined into current moneys, his treasure will not defray him as he travels. Tribulation is treasure in the nature of it, but it is not current money in the use of it, except we get nearer and nearer our home, heaven, by it. Another may be sick too, and sick to death, and this affliction may lie in his bowels, as gold in a mine, and be of no use to him; but this bell that tells me of his affliction, digs out, and applies that gold to me: if by this consideration of another's danger, I take mine own into contemplation, and so secure myself, by making my recourse to my God, who is our only security.

XVIII. MEDITATION

THE *Bell* rings out; the *pulse* thereof is changed; the *tolling* was a *faint*, and *intermitting pulse*, upon one side; this *stronger*, and argues *more* and *better life*. His *soule* is gone out; and as a Man, who had a lease of 1000. *yeeres* after the expiration of a short one, or an inheritance after the *life* of a man in a *consumption*, he is now entred into the possession of his *better estate*. His *soule* is gone; *whither?* Who saw it *come in*, or who saw it *goe out? No body;* yet every body is sure, he *had one*, and *hath none*. If I will aske meere *Philosophers*, what the *soule* is, I shall finde amongst them, that will tell me, it is nothing, but the *temperament* and *harmony*, and *just and equall composition of the Elements in the body*, which produces all those *faculties* which we ascribe to the *soule;* and so, in it selfe is *nothing*, no *separable substance*, that overlives the *body*. They see the *soule* is nothing else in other *Creatures*, and they affect an *impious humilitie*, to think *as low* of *Man*. But if my *soule* were no more than the soul of a *beast*, I could not thinke so; that *soule* that can reflect upon it selfe, *consider* it selfe, is *more* than so. If I will aske, not meere *Philosophers*, but *mixt men*, *Philosophicall Divines, how* the *soule*, being a *separate substance*, enters into *Man*, I shall finde some that will tell me, that it is by *generation*, and *procreation* from *parents*, because they thinke it hard, to charge the *soule* with the guiltiness of *originall* sinne, if the *soule* were infused into a *body*, in which it must necessarily grow *foule*, and contract *originall sinne*, whether it *will* or *no;* and I shall finde some that will tell mee, that it is by *immediate infusion from God*, because they think it hard, to *maintaine* an *immortality* in such a *soule*, as should be begotten, and derived with the *body* from *mortall parents*. If I will aske, not a *few men*, but almost *whole bodies, whole Churches*, what becomes of the *soules* of the *righteous*, at the *departing* thereof from the *body*, I shall bee told by some, *That they attend an expiation, a purification in a place of torment;* By some, that *they attend the fruition of the sight of God, in a place of rest; but yet, but of expectation;* By some, *that they passe to an immediate possession of the Presence of God. S. Augustine* studied the *nature* of the *soule*, as much as anything, but the *salvation of the soule;* and he sent an expresse *Messenger* to Saint *Hierome*, to consult of some things concerning the *soule:* But he satisfies

himselfe with this: *Let the departure of my soule to salvation be evident to my faith, and I care the lesse, how darke the entrance of my soule, into my body, bee to my reason*. It is the *going out*, more than the *comming in*, that concernes us. This *soule*, this Bell tells me, is *gone out; Whither?* Who shall tell mee that? I know not *who it is;* much less *what he was;* The condition of the man, and the course of his life, which should tell mee *whither* hee is gone, I know not. I was not there in his *sicknesse*, nor at his *death;* I saw not his *way*, nor his *end*, nor can aske them, who did, thereby to *conclude*, or *argue*, whither he is gone. But yet I have one neerer mee than all these; mine owne *Charity;* I aske that; and that tels me, *He is gone to everlasting rest*, and *joy*, and *glory:* I owe him a good *opinion;* it is but *thankfull charity* in mee, because I received *benefit* and *instruction* from him when his *Bell* told: and I, being made the fitter to *pray* by that disposition, wherein I was assisted by his occasion, did *pray* for him; and I *pray* not without *faith;* so I doe *charitably*, so I do *faithfully* beleeve, that that *soule* is gone to everlasting *rest*, and joy, arid glory. But for the *body*, how poore a wretched thing is *that?* wee cannot expresse it *so fast*, as it growes *worse* and *worse*. That *body* which scarce *three minutes* since was such a *house*, as that that *soule*, which made but one step from thence to *Heaven*, was scarse thorowly content, to leave that for *Heaven:* that *body* hath lost the *name* of a *dwelling house*, because none dwells in it, and is making haste to lose the name of a *body*, and dissolve to *putrefaction*. Who would not bee affected, to see a cleere and sweet *River* in the *Morning*, grow a *kennell* of muddy land water by *noone*, and condemned to the saltnesse of the *Sea* by *night?* And how lame a *picture*, how faint a *representation* is that, of the precipitation of mans body to *dissolution! Now* all the parts built up, and knit by a lovely *soule*, now but a *statue* of *clay*, and *now*, these limbs melted off, as if that *clay* were but *snow;* and now, the whole *house* is but a *handfull* of *sand*, so much *dust*, and but a pecke of *rubbidge*, so much *bone*. If *he*, who, as this *Bell* tells mee, is gone now, were some *excellent Artificer*, who comes to him for a *clocke*, or for a *garment* now? or for *counsaile*, if hee were a *Lawyer?* If a *Magistrate*, for *Justice? Man*, before hee hath his *immortall soule*, hath a *soule* of *sense*, and a *soule* of *vegetation* before that: This *immortall soule* did not forbid other soules, to be in us before, but when this *soule* departs, it carries all with it; no more *vegetation*, no more *sense:* such a *Mother in law* is the *Earth*, in respect of our *naturall mother;* in her

wombe we *grew;* and when she was delivered of us, wee were planted in some *place*, in some *calling* in the *world;* In the wombe of the *earth*, wee *diminish*, and when shee is *deliverd* of us, our *grave opened* for another, wee are not *transplanted*, but *transported*, our *dust* blowne away with *prophane dust*, with *every wind*.

XIX. MEDITATION

ALL this while the *Physitians* themselves have beene *patients*, patiently attending when they should see any *land* in this *Sea*, any *earth*, any *cloud*, any *indication* of *concoction* in these waters. Any *disorder* of mine, any *pretermission* of theirs, exalts the disease, accelerates the rages of it; no *diligence* accelerates the *concoction*, the *maturitie* of the *disease;* they must stay till the *season* of the sicknesse come, and till it be ripened of it selfe, and then they may put to their hand, to *gather* it before it *fall* off, but they cannot hasten the *ripening*. Why should wee looke for it in a *disease*, which is the *disorder*, the *discord*, the *irregularities* the *commotion*, and *rebellion* of the *body?* It were scarce a *disease*, if it could bee *ordered*, and made obedient to our *times*. Why should wee looke for that in *disorder*, in a *disease*, when we cannot have it in *Nature*, who is so *regular*, and so *pregnant*, so forward to bring her worke to perfection, and to light? Yet we cannot awake the *July-flowers* in *January*, nor retard the *flowers* of the *spring* to *autumne*. We cannot bid the *fruits* come in *May*, nor the *leaves* to sticke on in *December*. A *woman* that is weake cannot put off her *ninth moneth* to a *tenth* for her *deliveries* and say shee will stay till shee bee *stronger;* nor a *Queene* cannot hasten it to a *seventh*, that shee may bee ready for some other pleasure. *Nature* (if we looke for *durable* and *vigorous* effects) will not admit *preventions*, nor *anticipations*, nor *obligations* upon her; for they are *precontracts*, and she will bee left to her *libertie*. *Nature* would not be spurred, nor forced to mend her pace; nor *power*, the *power of man; greatnesse* loves not that kinde of *violence* neither. There are of *them* that will *give*, that will *do justice*, that will *pardon*, but they have their owne *seasons* for al these, and he that knowes not *them*, shall *starve* before that gift come, and *ruine*, before the justice, and *dye* before the pardon save him: some *tree* beares no fruit, except much *dung* be laid about it; and *Justice* comes not from some, till they bee richly manured: some *trees* require much *visiting*, much *watring*, much *labour;* and some men give not their *fruits* but upon *importunitie;* some trees require *incision*, and *pruning*, and *lopping;* some men must bee *intimidated* and *syndicated* with *Commissions*, before they will deliver the fruits of *Justice;* some *trees* require the *early* and the *often* accesse of the *Sunne;* some men *open* not, but upon the *favours* and

letters of *Court mediation;* some *trees* must bee *housd* and kept within doore; some men locke up, not onely their liberalitie, but their *Justice*, and their *compassion*, till the sollicitatiorn of a *wife*, or a *sonne*, or a *friend*, or a *servant* turne the *key*. *Reward* is the *season* of one man, and *importunitie* of another; *feare* the *season* of one man, and *favour* of another; *friendship* the *season* of one man, and *naturall affection* of another; and hee that knowes not their *seasons*, nor cannot *stay* them, must lose the *fruits;* As *Nature* will not, so *power* and *greatnesse* will not bee put to change their *seasons;* and shall wee looke for this *Indulgence* in a *disease*, or thinke to shake it off before it bee *ripe?* All this while, therefore, we are but upon a *defensive warre*, and that is but a *doubtfull state;* especially where they who are *besieged* doe know the *best* of their *defences*, and doe not know the *worst* of their *enemies power;* when they cannot mend their *works within*, and the *enemie* can increase his *numbers without*. O how many farre more miserable, and farre more worthy to be lesse miserable than I, are besieged with this *sicknesse*, and lacke their *Sentinels*, their *Physitians* to *watch*, and lacke their *munition*, their *cordials* to *defend*, and perish before the *enemies* weaknesse might invite them to *sally*, before the *disease* shew any *declination*, or admit any way of *working* upon it selfe! In me the siege is so farre slackned, as that we may come to *fight*, and so die in the *field*, if I *die*, and not in a *prison*.

XX. MEDITATION

THOUGH counsel seeme rather to consist of *spirituall parts,* than *action,* yet *action* is the *spirit* and the *soule* of *counsell. Counsels* are not alwaies determined in *Resolutions;* wee cannot alwaies say, *this was concluded; actions* are alwaies determined in *effects;* wee can say *this was done*. Then have *Lawes* their *reverence*, and their *majestie,* when we see the *Judge* upon the *Bench* executing them. Then have *counsels of warre* their *impressions*, and their *operations*, when we see the *seale* of an *Armie* set to them. It was an ancient way of celebrating the *memorie* of such as deserved well of the *State,* to afford them that kinde of *statuarie representation,* which was then called *Hermes;* which was, *the head and shoulders of a man, standing upon a Cube,* but those *shoulders* without *armes* and *hands*. All together it figured a *constant supporter of the State*, by his *counsell:* But in this *Hieroglyphique*, which they made without *hands,* they passe their consideration no farther, but that the *Counsellor* should bee without *hands*, so farre as *not to reach out his hand to forraigne tentations of bribes, in matters of Counsell*, and that it was not necessary, that the *head* should employ *his owne hand;* that *the same men* should serve in the *execution*, which assisted in the *Counsell;* but that there should not belong *hands* to every *head, action* to every *counsell*, was never intended, so much as in *figure*, and *representation*. For, as *Matrimonie* is scarce to bee called *Matrimonie*, where there is a *resolution* against the *fruits of matrimonie*, against the having of *Children*, so *counsels* are not *counsels*, but illusions, where there is from the beginning no purpose to execute the determinations of those *counsels*. The *arts* and *sciences* are most properly referred to the *head;* that is their proper *Element* and *Spheare;* but yet the *art* of *proving, Logique*, and the art of *perswading, Rhetorique,* are deduced to the *hand*, and *that* expressed by a *hand* contracted into a *fist*, and *this* by a *hand* enlarged, and expanded; and evermore the *power of man*, and the *power of God* himselfe is expressed so, *All things are in his hand;* neither is *God* so often presented to us, by names that carry our consideration upon *counsell*, as upon *execution* of *counsell;* he is oftener called the *Lord of Hosts*, than by all other *names*, that may be referred to the other signification. Hereby therefore wee take into our *meditation,* the slipperie condition of *man,*

whose *happinesse*, in any kinde, the defect of *any one thing*, conducing to that *happinesse*, may *ruine;* but it must have *all the peeces* to make it up. Without *counsell*, I had not got thus farre; without *action* and *practise*, I should goe no farther towards *health*. But what is the present necessary action? purging: A *withdrawing*, a violating of *Nature, a farther weakening: O deare price*, and *O strange way* of *addition*, to doe it by *substraction;* of *restoring* Nature, *to violate Nature;* of *providing strength*, by *increasing weaknesses!* Was I not *sicke* before? And is it a *question of comfort* to be asked now, Did *your Physicke make you sicke?* Was that it that my *Physicke* promised, to make me *sicke?* This is another *step*, upon which we may stand, and see farther into the *miserie of man*, the *time*, the *season* of his *Miserie;* It must bee done *now: O over-cunning, over-watchfull, overdiligent*, and *over-sociable misery of man*, that seldome comes alone, but then when it may accompanie other *miseries*, and so put one another into the higher *exaltation*, and better *heart!* I am ground even to an *attenuation*, and must proceed to *evacuation*, all waies to exinanition and annihilation.

XXI. MEDITATION

IF MAN had beene left *alone* in this *world*, at first, shall I thinke, that he would not have *fallen?* If there had beene no *Woman*, would not man have served, to have beene his own *Tempter?* When I see him now, subject to infinite weaknesses, fall into *infinite sinne*, without any *forraine tentations*, shall I thinke, hee would have had *none*, if hee had beene *alone? God* saw that Man needed a *Helper*, if hee should bee well; but to make *Woman* ill, the *Devill* saw, that there needed no *third*. When God, and *wee* were *alone*, in *Adam*, that was not enough; when the *Devill* and wee were *alone*, in *Eve*, it was enough. O what a *Giant* is *Man*, when he fights against himselfe, and what a *Dwarfe* when hee *needs*, or *exercises* his owne assistance for himselfel I cannot *rise* out of my bed, till the *Physitian enable* mee, nay I cannot tel, that I am able to rise, till *hee* tell me so. I *doe* nothing, I *know* nothing of myselfe: how little, and how impotent a peece of the *world*, is any *Man* alone! and how much lesse a peece of *himselfe* is *that Man!* So little, as that when it falls out, (as it falls out in some cases) that more *misery*, and more *oppression*, would be an *ease* to a *man*, he cannot give himselfe that *miserable addition*, of *more misery;* a *man* that is *pressed to death*, and might be eased by more *weights*, cannot lay those more *weights* upon himselfe: Hee can sinne *alone*, and suffer *alone*, but not *repent*, not bee *absolved*, without *another*. Another tels mee, *I may rise;* and *I doe* so. But is every *raising a preferment?* or is every present *Preferment a station?* I am readier to fall to the *Earth*, now I am up, than I was when I *lay* in the bed: O *perverse way, irregular motion of Man;* even *rising* it selfe is the way to *Ruine*. How many *men* are raised, and then doe not *fill* the place they are raised to? No *corner* of any place can bee *empty;* there can be no *vacuity;* If that *Man* doe not fill the place, *other men* will; complaints of his *insufficiency* will *fill* it; Nay, such an abhorring is there in *Nature*, of *vacuity*, that if there be but an *imagination* of not *filling*, in any *man*, that which is but *imagination* neither, will *fill* it, that is *rumor* and *voice*, and it will be *given out*, (upon no ground, but *Imagination*, and no man knowes *whose* imagination) that hee is *corrupt* in his place, or *insufficient* in his place, and another prepared to *succeed* him in his place. A man *rises*, sometimes, and *stands* not, because hee doth not, or is not beleeved to fill

his place; and sometimes he *stands* not, because hee *overfills* his place: Hee may bring so much *vertue*, so much *Justice*, so much *integrity* to the place, as shall *spoile* the place, *burthen* the place; his *integrity* may bee a *Libell* upon his *Predecessor*, and cast an *infamy* upon him, and a *burthen* upon his *successor*, to proceede by *example*, and to bring the place itselfe to an *under-value*, and the *market* to an *uncertainty*. I am up, and I seeme to *stand*, and I goe *round;* and I am a new *Argument* of the new *Philosophie*, That the *Earth* moves round; why may I not beleeve, that the *whole earth* moves in a *round motion*, though that seeme to mee to *stand*, when as I seeme to *stand* to my Company, and yet am carried, in a giddy, and *circular motion*, as I *stand?* Man hath no *center* but *misery; there* and onely *there*, hee is *fixt*, and sure to finde himselfe. How little soever hee bee *raised*, he *moves*, and moves in a *circle*, giddily; and as in the *Heavens*, there are but a few *Circles*, that goe about the whole world, but many *Epicircles*, and other lesser *Circles*, but yet *Circles*, so of those men, which are *raised*, and put into *Circles*, few of them move from *place* to *place*, and passe through many and beneficiall places, but fall into little *Circles*, and, within a step or two, are at their *end*, and not so well, as they were in the *Center*, from which they were *raised*. Every thing serves to *exemplifies* to *illustrate* mans *misery*. But I need goe no farther, than *my selfe:* for a long time, I was not able to *rise;* At last, I must bee *raised* by others; and now I am *up*, I am ready to sinke *lower* than before.

XXII. MEDITATION

HOW *ruinous* a *farme* hath man taken, in taking *himselfe!* How ready is the *house* every day to fall downe, and how is all the *ground* overspread with *weeds, all* the body with *diseases!* where not onely every *turfe*, but every *stone*, beares *weeds;* not onely every *muscle* of the *flesh*, but every *bone* of the *body*, hath some *infirmitie;* every little *flint* upon the *face* of this *soile*, hath some *infectious weede*, every *tooth* in our *head*, such a paine as a *constant man* is afraid of, and yet *ashamed* of that *feare*, of that sense of the paine. How *deare*, and how *often* a *rent* doth Man pay for this *farme!* hee paies *twice a day*, in *double meales*, and how little time he hath to *raise his rent!* How many *holy daies* to call him from his labour! Every day is *halfe-holy day*, halfe spent in *sleepe*. What *repararations*, and *subsidies*, and *contributions* he is put to, besides his *rent!* What *medicines*, besides his *diet!* and what *Inmates* he is *faine* to take in, besides his owne *families* what *infectious diseases*, from *other men! Adam* might have had *Paradise* for *dressing* and *keeping* it; and *then* his *rent* was not *improved* to such a *labour*, as would have made his *brow sweat*; and yet he gave it over; how farre greater a *rent* doe wee pay for this farme, this *body*, who pay *our selves*, who pay the *farme it selfe*, and cannot *live* upon it! Neither is our *labour* at an end, when wee have cut downe some *weed*, as soone as it sprung up, corrected some *violent* and dangerous *accident* of a *disease*, which would have destroied *speedily;* nor when wee have pulled up that *weed*, from the very *root*, recovered *entirely* and *soundly*, from that *particular disease;* but the whole *ground* is of an *ill nature*, the whole soile *ill disposed;* there are inclinations, there is a propensenesse to *diseases* in the *body*, out of which without any other *disorder*, *diseases* will grow, and so wee are put to a continuall labour upon this *farme*, to a continuall studie of the whole *complexion* and *constitution* of our *body*. In the *distempers* and *diseases* of *soiles, sourenesse, drinesse, weeping*, any kinde of *barrennesse*, the *remedy* and the *physicke*, is, for a great part, sometimes in *themselves;* sometime[s] the very *situation* releeves them; the *hanger* of a *hill*, will purge and vent his owne *malignant moisture;* and the burning of the upper *turfe* of some ground (as *health* from *cauterizing*) puts a *new* and a *vigorous youth* into that *soile*, and there rises a kinde of *Phœnix* out of the *ashes*, a

fruitfulnesse out of that which was *barren* before, and *by that*, which is the barrennest of all, *ashes*. And where the *ground* cannot give itselfe *Physicke*, yet it receives *Physicke* from other grounds, from other soiles, which are not the worse, for having contributed that helpe to them, from *Marle* in other *hils*, or from *slimie sand* in other *shoares: grounds* helpe *themselves*, or hurt not other *grounds*, from whence they receive *helpe*. But I have taken a *farme* at this *hard rent*, and upon those *heavie covenants*, that it can afford it selfe no *helpe;* (no part of my *body*, if it were cut off, would *cure* another part; in some cases it might *preserve* a sound part, but in no case *recover* an infected) and, if my *body* may have any *Physicke*, any *Medicine* from another *body*, one *Man* from the flesh of another *Man* (as by Mummy, or any such *composition*,) it must bee from a man that is dead, and not, as in other *soiles*, which are never the worse for contributing their *Marle*, or their fat slime to my *ground*. There is nothing in the same *man*, to helpe *man*, nothing in *mankind* to helpe *one another* (in this sort, by way of *Physicke*) but that hee who *ministers* the *helpe*, is in as ill case, as he that *receives* it would have beene, if he had not had it; for hee from whose *body* the *Physicke* comes, is *dead*. When therefore I tooke this *farme*, undertooke this body, I undertooke to *draine*, not a marish, but a *moat*, where there was, not water *mingled* to offend, but all was *water;* I undertooke to *perfume dung*, where no one part, but all was equally *unsavory;* I undertooke to make such a thing *wholsome*, as was not *poison* by any manifest quality, *intense heat*, or *cold*, but *poison* in the *whole substance*, and in the *specifique forme* of it. To cure the *sharpe accidents* of *diseases*, is a great worke; to cure the *disease it selfe* is a greater; but to cure the *body*, the *root*, the *occasion* of *diseases*, is a worke reserved for the great Phisitian, which he doth never any other way, but by *glorifying* these *bodies* in the next world.

XXIII. MEDITATION

IT IS not in *mans body*, as it is in the *Citie*, that when the *Bell* hath rung, to cover your *fire*, and rake up the *embers*, you may lie downe and sleepe without feare. Though you have by *physicke* and *diet*, raked up the *embers* of your *disease*, stil there is a feare of a *relapse;* and the *greater* danger is in that. Even in *pleasures*, and in *paines*, there is a *propriety*, a *Meum* and *Tuum;* and a man is most affected with that *pleasure* which is *his*, *his* by former enjoying and experience, and most intimidated with those *paines* which are *his, his* by a wofull sense of them, in former afflictions. A *covetous* person, who hath preoccupated all his senses, filled all his capacities, with the *delight* of *gathering*, wonders how any man can have any *taste* of *any pleasure* in *any openesse*, or *liberalitie;* So also in *bodily paines*, in a fit of the *stone*, the Patient wonders why any man should call the *Gout* a *paine:* And hee that hath felt neither, but the *tooth-ache* is as much afraid of a fit of that, as either of the other, of either of the other. *Diseases*, which we never *felt* in our selves, come but to a *compassion* of others that have endured them; Nay, *compassion* it selfe comes to no great *degree*, if wee have not felt in some *proportion*, in *our selves*, that which wee lament and condole in another. But when wee have had those torments in their *exaltation, our selves*, wee tremble at a relapse. When wee must *pant* through all those *fierie heats*, and *saile* thorow all those *overflowing sweats*, when wee must *watch* through all those long *nights*, and *mourne* through all those long *daies*, (*daies* and *nights*, so *long*, as that *Nature* her selfe shall seeme to be *perverted*, and to have put the *longest day*, and the *longest night*, which should bee *six moneths* asunder, into one *naturall, unnaturall day*) when wee must stand at the same *barre*, expect the returne of *Physitians* from their *consultations*, and not bee sure of the same *verdict*, in any good *Indications*, when we must goe the same *way* over againe, and not see the same *issue*, this is a *state*, a *condition*, a *calamitie*, in respect of which, any other *sicknesse*, were a *convalescence*, and any *greater, lesse*. It addes to the *affliction*, that *relapses* are, (and for the most part justly) imputed to *our selves*, as occasioned by some *disorder* in us; and so we are not onely *passive*, but *active*, in our owne *ruine;* we doe not onely stand under a *falling house*, but *pull* it downe upon us; and wee are not onely

executed, (that implies *guiltinesse*) but wee are *executioners*, (that implies *dishonor*) and *executioners* of *our selves*, (and that implies *impietie*). And wee fall from that *comfort* which wee might have in our first *sicknesse*, from that *meditation*, *Alas, how generally miserable is Man, and how subject to diseases*, (for in that it is some degree of *comfort*, that wee are but in the state *common* to all) we fall, I say, to this *discomfort*, and *selfe accusing*, and *selfe condemning; Alas, how unprovident, and in that, how unthankfull to God and his instruments am I, in making so ill use of so great benefits, in destroying so soone, so long a worke, in relapsing, by my disorder, to that from which they had delivered mee;* and so my *meditation* is fearefully transferred from the *body* to the *minde*, and from the consideration of the *sicknesse* to that sinne, that *sinful carelessness* by which I have occasioned my *relapse*. And amongst the many *weights* that aggravate a *relapse*, this also is one, that a *relapse* proceeds with a more violent dispatch, and more *irremediably*, because it finds the *Countrie weakned*, and *depopulated* before. Upon a *sicknesse*, which as yet appeares not, wee can scarce fix a *feare*, because wee know not what to feare; but as *feare* is the *busiest*, and *irksomest affection*, so is a *relapse* (which is still *ready to come*) into that, which is but newly gone, the *nearest object*, the *most immediate* exercise of that *affection* of *feare*.

PARADOXES

CONTENTS

I. A Defence of Womens Inconstancy.
II. That Women ought to Paint.
III. That by Discord things increase.
IV. That good is more common than euill.
V. That all things kill themselues.
VI. That it is possible to find some vertue in some Women.
VII. That Old men are more fantastique than Young.
VIII. That Nature is our worst Guide.
IX. That only Cowards dare Dye.
X. That a Wise Man is knowne by much Laughing.
XI. That the gifts of the Body are better than those of the Minde.

I. A Defence of Womens Inconstancy.

THat Women are *Inconstant*, I with any man confesse, but that *Inconstancy* is a bad quality, I against any man will maintaine: For euery thing as it is one better than another, so it it fuller of *change*; The *Heauens* themselues continually turne, the Starres moue, the *Moone* changeth; *Fire* whirleth, *Aire* flyeth, *Water* ebbs and flowes, the face of the *Earth* altereth her lookes, *time* staies not; the Colour that is most light will take most dyes: soe in Men, they that haue the most reason are the most intolerable in their designes and the darkest or most ignorant, doe seldomest change; therefore Women changing more than Men, haue also more *Reason*. Thye cannot be immutable like stockes, like stones, like the Earths dull Center; Gold that lyeth still, rusteth; Water, corrupteth; Aire that moueth not, poysoneth; then why should that which is the perfection of other things, be imputed to Women as the greatest imperfection? Because thereby they deceiue men. Are not your wits pleased with those iests, which coozen your expectation? You can call it Pleasure to be beguild in troubles, and in the most excellent toy in the world, you call it Treacherie: I would you had your *Mistresses* so constant, that they would neuer change, no not so much as their *smocks*, then should you see what sluttish vertue, *Constancy* were. *Inconstancy* is a most commendable and cleanly quality, and Women in this quality are farre more absolute than the Heauens, than the Starres, Moone, or any thing beneath it; for long obseruation hath pickt certainty out of their mutability. The Learned are so well acquainted with the Starrs, Signes and Planets, that they make them but Characters, to read the meaning of the Heauen in his owne forehead. Euery simple Fellow can bespeake the change of the *Moone* a great while beforehand: but I would faine haue the learnedst man so skilfull, as to tell when the simplest Woman meaneth to varie. Learning affords no rules to know, much less knowledge to rule the mind of a Woman: For as *Philosophy* teacheth us, that *Light things do alwayes tend vpwards* and *heauy things decline downeward;* Experience teacheth vs otherwise, that the disposition of a Light Woman, is to fall downe, the nature of Women being contrary to all Art and Nature. Women are like *Flies*, which feed among vs at our Table, or *Fleas* sucking our very blood, who leaue not our most retired places free from their familiarity, yet for all their fellowship will they neuer be tamed nor commanded by vs. Women

are like the *Sun*, which is violently carried one way, yet hath a proper course contrary: so though they, by the mastery of some ouer-ruling churlish hasbands, are forced to his Byas, yet haue they a motion of their owne, which their husbands neuer know of. It is the nature of nice and fastidious minds to know things onely to be weary of them: Women by their slye *changeablenesse*, and pleasing doublenesse, preuent euen the mislike of those, for they can neuer be so well knowne, but that there is still more vnknowne. Euery Woman is a *Science*; for he that plods vpon a Woman all his life long, shall at length find himselfe short of the knowledge of her: they are borne to take downe the pride of wit, and Ambition of wisdome, making *fooles* wise in the aduenturing to winne them, *wisemen* fooles in conceit of losing their labours; *witty* men starke mad, being confounded with their vncertainties. *Philosophers* write against them for spite, not desert, that hauing attained to some knowledge in all other things, in them onely they know nothing, but are meerely ignorant: *Actiu* and *Experienced* men raile against them, because they loue in ther liuelesse & decrepit age, when all goodnesse leaues them. These enuious *Libellers* ballad against them, because hauing nothing in themselues able to deserue their loue, they maliciously discommend al they cannot obtaine, thinking to make men beleeue they know much, because they are able to dispraise much, and rage against *Inconstancy*, when they were neuer admitted into so much fauour as to bee forsaken. In mine Opinion such Men are happy that Women are *Inconstant*, for so may they chance to be beloued of some excellent Women (when it comes to their turne) out of their *Inconstancy* and mutability though not out of their owne desert. And what reason is there to clog any Woman with one Man, be he neuer so singular? Women had rather, and it is farre better and more Iudiciall to enioy all the vertues in seuerall Men, than but some of them in one, for otherwise they lose their taste, like diuerse sorts of meate minced together in one dish: and to haue all excellencies in one man (if it were possible) is *Confusion* and *Diuersity*. Now who can deny, but such as are obstinately bent to vndervalue their worth, are those that haue not soule enough to comprehend their excellency, Women being the most excellentest Creatures, in that Man is able to subiect all things else, & to grow wise in euery thing, but still persists a foole in Woman? The greatest *Scholler* if he once take a wife, is found so vnlearned, that must begin his *Hornebooke*, and all is by *Inconstancy*. To conclude therefore; this

name of *Inconstancy,* which hath so much beene poisoned with slaunders, ought to be changed into *variety*, for the which the world is so delightfull, and a Woman for that the most delightfull thing in this world.

II. That Women ought to Paint.

FOulenesse is *Lothsome*: can that be so which helpes it? who forbids his beloued to gird her wast? to burnish her teeth? Or to perfume her breath? yet that the *Face* be more precisely regarded, it concernes more: for the secret parts needs the lesse respect; but of the *Face*, discouered to all Examinations and suruayes, there is not too nice a Ialousie. Nor doth it onely draw the busy eyes, but it is subject to the diuinest touch of all, to *kissing*, the strange and mysticall vnion of soules. If she should prostitute her selfe to a more vnworthy Man than thy selfe, how earnestly and iustly wouldst thou exclaime? that for want of this easier and ready way of repairing, to betray her body to ruine & deformity (the tyrannous *Rauishers*, and sodaine *deflourers* of all Women) what a heynous Adultery is it? What thou louest in her *face* is *colour*, and *painting* giues that, but thou hatest it, not because it is, but because thou knowest it. Foole, whom Ignorance makes happy, the Starres, the Sunne, the Skye whom thou admirest, alas, haue no *colour*, but are faire because they seeme to be coloured: if this seeming will not satisfie thee in her, thou hast good assurance of her *colour*, when thou seest her *lay* it on. If her *face* be *painted* on a Boord or Wall, thou wilt loue it, and the Boord, and the Wall: Canst thou loath it then when it speakes, smiles, and kisses, because it is painted? Are wee not more delighted with seeing Birds, Fruites, and Beasts *painted* than wee are with naturalls? And doe wee not with pleasure behold the *painted* shape of monsters and Diuells, whom true, wee durst not regard? Wee repaire the ruines of our houses, but first cold tempests warnes vs of it, and bytes vs through it; wee mend the wracke and staines of our Apparell, but first our eyes, and other bodies are offended, but by this prouidence of Women, this is preuented. If in *kissing* or *breathing* vpon her, the *painting* fall off, thou art angry, wilt thou bee so, if it sticke on? thou didst loue her, if thou beginnest to hate her, then ‘tis because shee is not *painted*. If thou wilt say now, thou didst hate her before, thou didst hate her and loue her together, be constant in something, and loue her who shewes her great *loue* to thee, in taking the paines to seeme *louely* to thee.

III. That by Discord things increase.

Nullos esse Deos inane Coelum
Affirmat Coelius, probatq; quod se
Factum vidit, dum negat hæc, beatum.

SO I asseuere this the more boldly, because while I maintaine it, and feele the *Contrary repugnancies* and *adverse fightings* of the *Elements* in my Body, my Body increaseth; and whilst I differ from common opinions by the *Discord*, the number of my *Paradoxes* increaseth. All the rich benefits we can frame to our selues in *Concord*, is but an *Euen* conseruation of things; in which *Euennesse* wee can expect no change, no motion; therefore no increase or augmentation, which is a member of Motion. And if this *vnitie* and *peace* can giue *increase* to things, how mightily is *discord* and *warre* to that purpose, which are indeed the onely ordinary *Parents* of *Peace*. *Discord* is neuer so barren that it affords no fruit; for the *fall* of one *estate* is at the worst the inceaser of another, because it is as impossible to find a *discommodity* without *aduantage*, as to find *Corruption* without *Generation*: But it is the *Nature* and *Office* of *Concord* to *preserue* onely, which property when it leaues, it differs from it selfe, which is the greatest *discord* of all. All *victories* & *Emperies* gayned by warre, and all Iudiciall decidings of doubts in *peace*, I doe claime children of *Discord*. And who can deny but *Controuersies* in *Religion* are growne greater by discord, and not the *Controuersie*, but *Religion* it selfe: For in a *troubled misery* Men are alwaies more *Religious* than in a *secure peace.* The number of *good* men, the onely charitable nourishers of *Concord*, wee see is thinne, and daily melts and waines; but of *bad discording* it is infinite, & growes hourely. Wee are ascertained of all *Disputable* doubts onely by arguing and differing in *Opinion*, and if formall *disputation* (which is but a painted, counterfeit, and dissembled *discord*) can worke vs this benefit, what shall not a full and maine *discord* accomplish? Truly me thinkes I owe a *deuotion*, yea a *sacrifice* to *discord*, forecasting that *Ball* vpon *Ida*, and for all that businesse of *Troy*, whom ruin'd I admire more than *Babylon*, *Rome*, or *Quinzay*, remoued *Corners*, not only fufilled with her *fame*, but with *Citties* and *Thrones* planted by her *Fugitiues*. Lastly, betweene *Cowardice* and

dispaire, *Valour* is gendred; and so the *Discord* of *Extreames* begets all vertues, but of the *like things* there is no issue without a miracle:

Uxor pessima, pessimus maritus
Miror tam malè conuenire.

He wonders that betweene two so like, there could be any *discord,* yet perchance for all this *Discord* there was nere the lesse *Increase*.

IV. That good is more common than euill.

I Haue not beene so pittifully tired with any *vanity*, as with silly *old Mens* exclaiming against these times, and extolling their owne: Alas! they betray themselues, for if the *times* bee *changed*, their manners haue changed them. But their senses are to *pleasures*, as *sicke Mens* tastes are to *Liquors*; for indeed no *new thing* is done in the *world*; all things are what, and as they were, and *Good* is as euer it was, more plenteous, and must of necessity bee *more common than Euill*, because it hath this for nature and perfection to bee *common*. It makes *Loue* to all *Natures*, all, all affect it. So that in the *Worlds* early *Infancy*, there was a time when nothing was *Euill*, but if this *World* shall suffer *dotage* in the extreamest *Crookednesse* thereof, there shalbe no time when nothing shall bee *good*. It dares appeare and spread, and glister in the *World*, but *Euill* buries it selfe in the night and darkenesse, and is chastised and suppressed when Good is cherished and rewarded. And as *Imbroderers*, *Lapidaries*, and other *Artisans*, can by all things adorne their workes; for by adding better things, the better they shew in *Lust* and in *Eminency*; so Good doth not onely prostrate her *Amiablenesse* to all, but refuses no end, no not of her vtter contrary *Euill*, that she may bee the more *common* to vs. For *Euill manners* are *Parents* of *good Lawes*; and in euery *Euill* there is an *excellency*, which (in common speech) we call *good*. For the fashions of *habits*, for our mouing in *gestures*, for phrases in our *speech*, wee say they were *good* as long as they were vsed, that is, as long as they were *common*; and wee eate, wee walke, onely when it is, or seemes, good to doe so. All *faire*, all *profitable*, all *vertuous*, is good, and these three things I thinke embrace all things, but their vtter *contraries*; of which also *faire* may be *rich* and *vertuous*; *poore*, may bee *vertuous* and *faire*; *vitious*, may be *faire* and *rich*; so that *Good* hath this good meanes to be *co[m]mon*, that some subiects she can possesse entirely; and in subiects poysoned with *Euill*, she can humbly stoope to accompany the *Euill*. And of *Indifferent* things many things are become perfectly good by being *Common*, as *Customes* by vse are made binding Lawes. But I remember nothing that is therefore *ill*, because it is Common, but *Women*, of whom also; *They that are most Common, are the best of that Occupation they professe.*

V. That all things kill themselues.

TO affect, yea to effect their owne *death*, all *liuing* things are importun'd, not by *Nature* onely which perfects them, but by *Art* and *Education*, which perfects her. *Plants* quickened and inhabited by the most vnworthy *soule*, which therefore neither *will* nor *worke*, affect an *end*, a *perfection*, a *death*; this they spend their spirits to attaine, this attained, they languish & wither. And by how much more they are by mans *Industry* warm'd, and cherished, and pampered; so much the more early they climbe to this *perfection*, this *death*. And if amongst *Men* not to *defend* be to *kill*, what a haynous *selfe-murther* is it, not to *defend it selfe*. This defence because Beasts neglect, they kill themselues, because they exceed vs in *number, strength*, and a *lawlesse liberty:* yea, of *Horses* and other beasts, they that inherit *most courage* by being bred of *gallantest parents*, and by *Artificiall nursing* are bettered, will runne to their owne *deaths*, neither sollicited by *spurres* which they need not, nor by *honour* which they apprehend not. If then the *valiant* kill himselfe, who can excuse the *coward*? Or how shall *Man* bee free from this, since the *first Man* taught vs this, except we cannot kill our selues, because he kill'd vs all. Yet lest something should repaire this *Common ruine*, wee daily kill our *bodies* with *surfets*, and our *minds* with *Anguishes*. Of our *powers*, *remembring* kills our *memory*; Of *Affections*, *Lus*ting our *lust*; of *vertues*, *Giuing* kills *Liberality*. And if these things kill themselues, they doe it in their best and supreme *perfection*: for after *perfection* immediately followes *excesse*, which changeth the natures & the names, and makes them not the same things. If then the best things kill themselues soonest, (for no *Affection* endures, and all things labour to this *perfection*) all trauell to their owne *death*, yea the frame of the whole *World*, if it were possible for *God* to be *idle*, yet because it *began*, must *dye*. Then in this *idlenesse* imagined in *God*, what could kill the *World* but it selfe, since *out of it, nothing is*?

VI. That it is possible to find some vertue in some Women.

Am not of that fear'd Impudence that I dare defend Women, or pronounce them good; yet wee see Physitians allow some vertue in euery poyson. Alas! why should we except Women? since certainly, they are good for Physicke at least, so as some wine is good for a feauer. And though they be the Occasioners of many sinnes, they are also the Punishers and Reuengers of the same sinnes: For I haue seldome seene one which consumes his substance and body upon them, escape diseases, or beggery; and this is their Iustice. And if suum cuiq; dare, bee the fulfilling of all Ciuill Iustice, they are most iust, for they deny that which is theirs to no man.

Tanquam non liceat puellanegat.

And who may doubt of great wisdome, in them, that doth but obserue with how labour and cunning our *Iusticers* and other *dispensers* of the *Lawes* study to imbrace them: and how zealously our *Preachers* dehort men from them, only by vrging their *subtilties*, and *policies*, and *wisdome*, which are in them? Or who can deny them a good measure of *Fortitude*, if he co[n]sider how *valiant men* they haue ouerthrowne, & being themselues ouerthrown how much, and how patiently they *beare*? And though they be most *intemperate* I care not, for I vndertooke to furnish them with *some vertue*, not with all. *Necessity*, which makes euen bad things good, preuailes also for them, for wee must say of them, as of some sharpe pinching *Lawes*; If men were free from *infirmities*, they were needlesse. These or none must serue for *reasons*, and it is my great happinesse that *Examples* proue not *rules*, for to confirme this *Opinion*, the World yeelds not *one Example*.

VII. That Old men are more fantastique than Young.

WHO reades this *Paradoxe* but thinks me more *Fantastike* now, than I was yesterday, when I did not thinke thus: And if one day make this sensible change in men, what will the burthen of many yeares? To bee *fantastique* in *young men* is *conceiptfull distemperature*, and a *witty madnesse*; but in *old men*, whose senses are withered, it becomes *naturall*, therefore more full and perfect. For as when we *sleepe* our *fancy* is most strong; so it is in *Age*, which is a *slumber* of the *deepesleepe of death*. They taxe vs of *Inconstancy*, which in themselues *young* they allowed; so that reproouing that which they did reprooue, their *Inconstancy* exceedeth ours, because they haue changed *once more* than wee. Yea, they are more idly busied in *conceited Apparell* than wee; for we, when we are *Melancholy*, wee are *blacke*; when *lusty*, *Greene*; when *forsaken*, *Tawney*; pleasing our owne *inward* affections, leauing them to others indifferent; but they presecribe *lawes*, and constraine the *Noble*, the *Scholler*, the *Merchant*, and all *Estates* to a certaine habit. The *Old men* of our time haue changed with patience their owne *bodies*, much of their *lawes*, much of their *languages*; yea their *Religion*, yet they accuse vs. To be *amorous* is proper and *naturall* in a *Yong man*, but in an *old man* most *fantastike*. And that *ridling humour* of *Iealousie*, which seekes and would not find, which requires and repents his knowledge, is in them most common, yet most *fantastike*. Yea, that which falls neuer in *young men*, is in them most *fantastike* and *naturall*, that is, *Couetousnesse*; euen at their *iourneyes end* to make great prouision. Is any *habit* of *young men* so *fantastike*, as in the hottest seasons to be *double-gowned* or *hooded* like our *Elders*? Or seemes it so *ridiculous* to weare *long* haire, as to weare none. Truly, as among the *Philosophers*, the *Skeptike*, which *doubts all*, was more contentious, than either the *Dogmatike* which affirmes, or *Academike* which *denyes all*; so are these vncertaine *Elders*, which both calls them *fantastike* which follow others *inuentions*, and them also which are led by their owne humorous suggestion, more *fantastike* than other.

VIII. That Nature is our worst Guide.

SHall she be *guide* to all *Creatures*, which is her selfe one? Or if she also haue a *guide*, shall any *Creature* haue a better guide than wee? The affections of *lust* and *anger*, yea euen to *erre* is *Naturall*; shall we follow these? Can she be a good *guide* to vs, which hath corrupted not vs but only herselfe? Was not the *first man* by the desire of *knowledge* corrupted euen in the *whitest integrity* of *Nature*? And did not *Nature* (if *Nature* did any thing) infuse into him this desire of *knowledge*, & so this *Corruption* in him, into vs? If by *Nature* we shall vnderstand our *essence*, our *definition*, or *reason, noblenesse*, then this being alike common to all (the *Idiot* and the *wizard* being equally *reasonable*) why should not all men hauing equally all one *nature*, follow one course? Or if wee shall vnderstand our *inclinations*; alas! how vnable a guide is that which followes the *temperature* of our slimie *bodies*? for we cannot say that we deriue our *inclinations*, our *mindes*, or *soules* from our *Parents* by any way: to say that it is *all, from all*, is *errour* in *reason*, for then with the first nothing remaines; or is a *part from all*, is *errour* in *experience*, for then this *part* equally imparted to many children, would like *Gauell-kind lands*, in few generations become nothing; or say it by *Communication*, is *errour* in *Diuinity*, for to communicate the *ability* of communicating *whole essence* with any but God, is vtterly *blasphemy*. And if thou hit thy *Fathers nature* and *inclination*, hee also had his Fathers, and so climbing vp, all comes of one man, all haue one *nature*, all shall imbrace one course; but that cannot be, therefore our *Complexions* and whole *Bodies*, we inherit from *parents*; our *inclinations* and mindes follow that: For our *mind* is heauy in our *bodies afflictions*, and reioyceth in our *bodies pleasure*: how then shall this *nature* gouerne vs, that is gouerned by the worst part of vs? *Nature though oft chased away, it will returne;* ‘tis true, but those *good motions* and *inspirations* which bee our guides must be *wooed, Courted*, and *welcomed*, or else they abandon vs. And that old *Axiome, nihil inuita, &c.* must not be said thou *shalt*, but thou *wilt* doe nothing against *Nature*; so *vnwilling* he notes vs to curbe our *naturall appetites*. Wee call our *bastards* alwayes our *naturall issue*, and wee define a *Foole* by nothing so ordinary, as by the name of *Naturall*. And that poore knowledge whereby we conceiue what *raine* is, what *wind*, what *Thunder*,

we call *Metaphysicke, supernaturall*; such *small* things, such *no* things doe we allow to our pliant *Natures* apprehension. Lastly, by following her, wee lose the pleasant, and lawfull *Commodities* of this *life*, for we shall drinke water and eate rootes, and those not sweet and delicate, as now by Mans *art* and *industry* they are made: wee shall lose all the necessities of *societie, lawes, arts*, and *sciences*, which are all the *workemanship* of *Man*: yea, we shall lacke the last *best refuge* of misery *Death*; because *no death is naturall*: for if yee wil not dare to call all *death violent* (though I see not why *sicknesses* be not *violences*) yet *causes* of all *deaths* proceed of the *defect* of that which *nature* made perfect, and would preserue, and therefore all against *nature*.

IX. That only Cowards dare Dye.

EXtreames are equally remooued from the *meane*; so that headlong *desperatenesse* asmuch offends true *valour*, as backward *Cowardice*: of which sort I reckon iustly all *vn-inforced deaths*. When will your *valiant* man dye of necessity? so *Cowards* suffer what cannot be auoided: and to runne into *death vnimportun'd*, is to runne into the first condemned desperatenesse. Will he dye when hee is *rich* and *happy*? then by liuing hee may doe more good: and in *Afflictions* and *miseries, death* is the chosen refuge of *Cowards*.

Fortiter isse faoit, qui miser esse potest.

But it is taught and practised among our *Gallants*, that rather than our reputations suffer any *maime*, or wee any *misery*, wee shall offer our *bre*sts to the *Cannons* mouth, yea to our *swords* points: And this seemes a very *braue* and a very *climbing* (which is a *Cowardly*, earthly, and indeed a very *groueling*) *spirit*. Why doe they *chaine* these slaues to the *Gallyes*, but that they thrust their *deaths*, & would at euery loose leape inito the *sea*? Why doe they take weapons from *condemned* men, but to barre them of that ease which *Cowards* affect, a *speedy death*. Truly this *life* is a *Tempest* and a *warfare*, and he which *dares dye*, to escape the *Anguish* of it, seemes to me, but so *valiant*, as he which dares hang himselfe, lest he bee prest to the *wars*. I haue seene one in that extremity of *Melancholy*, which was then become *Madnesse*, to make his owne *breath* an *Instrument* to stay his breath, and labour to choke himselfe; but alas, hee was *mad*. And we knew another that languished vnder the *oppression* of a poore *disgrace* so much, that he tooke more *paines* to *dye*, than would haue serued to haue nourished *life* and *spirit* enough to haue out-liued his *disgrace*. What *Foole* will call this *Cowardlinesse, Valour*? Or this *Basenesse, Humility*? And lastly, of these men which dye the *Allegoricall death* of entring into *Religion*, how few are found fit for any shew of *valiancy*? but onely a *soft* and *supple metall*, made onely for *Cowardly* solitarinesse.

X. That a Wise Man is knowne by much Laughing.

RIde, si sapis, ô puella ride; If thou beest *wise*, *laugh:* for since the *powers* of *discourse* and *Reason*, and *laughter* bee equally *proper* vnto Man onely, why shall not he be onely most *wise*, which hath most vse of *laughing*, aswell as he which hath most of *reasoning* and *discoursing*? I alwayes did, and shall vnderstand that *Adage*;

Per risum multum possis cognoscerestultum,

that by much *laughing* thou maist know there is a *Foole*, not, that the *laughers* are *Fooles*, but that among them there is some *Foole* at whom *wisemen* laugh: which moued *Erasmus* to put this as his first *Argument* in the mouth of his *Folly*, that *she made Beholders laugh*: for *fooles* are the most laughed at, and laugh the least themselues of any. And *Nature* saw this *faculty* to be so necessary in Man, that she hath beene content that by *more causes* we should be importuned to *laugh*, than to the *exercise* of any other *power*; for things in themselues vtterly *contrary*, beget this effect; for we laugh both at *witty* and *absurd* things: At both which sorts I haue seene Men *laugh so long*, and *so earnestly*, that at last they haue *wept* that they could laugh no more. And therefore the *Poët* hauing described the *quietnesse* of a *wise retired man*, saith in one, what we haue said before in many lines; *Quid facit Canius tuus? ridet.* We haue receiued that euen the *Extremity* of *laughing*, yea of *weeping* also, hath beene accounted *wisedome*: And that *Democritus* and *Heraclitus*, the *louers* of these *Extreames*, hath beene called *louers* of *wisedome*. Now among our *wisemen* I doubt not, but many would bee found who would laugh at *Heraclitus* weeping, none which weepe at *Democritus* laughing. At the hearing of *Comedies* or other *witty* reports, I haue noted some, which not vnderstanding *iests*, &c. haue yet chosen this as the best meanes to seeme *wise* and *vnderstanding*, to *laugh* when their *Companions laugh*; and I haue presumed them *ignorant*, whom I haue seene *vnmoued*. A *Foole* if he come into a *Princes Court*, and see a *Gay* man leaning at the wall, so *glistering*, and so *painted* in many *colours*, that he is hardly discerned, from one of the *pictures* in the *Arras*, hanging his *body* like an *Iron-bound-chest*, girt in and thicke ribb'd with *broad gold*

laces, may (and commonly doth) enuy him. But alas; shall a *wiseman*, which may not onely not *enuy*, but not *pitty* this *monster*, doe nothing? Yes, let him *laugh*. And if one of these *hot, cholerike fire-brands*, which nourish themselues by *qua*rrelling, and kindling others, spit vpon a *foole* one *sparke* of *disgrace*; hee, like a *thatcht house* quickly burning, may be *angry*; but the *wise man*, as *cold* as the *Salamander*, may not onely bee *angry* with him, but not be *sorry* for him; therefore let him *laugh*: so he shall bee knowne a *Man*, because hee can *laugh*; a *wise Man* that hee knowes at *what* to laugh, and a *valiant Man* that he *dares* laugh: for hee that *laughs* is iustly reputed more *wise*, than at whom it is *laughed*. And hence I thinke proceeds that which in these later *formall* times I haue much noted; that now when our *superstitious Ciuility* of *manners* is become a mutuall *tickling flattery* of one another, almost euery man affecteth an *humour* of *iesting*, and is content to be *deiect*, and to *deforme* himselfe, yea become *foole* to no other end that I can spye, but to giue his *wise Companion* occasion to *laugh*; and to shew themselues in *promptnesse* of *laughing* is so great in *wisemen*, that I thinke all *wisemen*, if any *wisemen* doe read this *Paradox*, will *laugh* both at it and me.

XI. That the gifts of the Body are better than those of the Minde.

Say againe, that the *body* makes the *mind*, not that it created it a *minde*, but *formes* it a *good* or a *bad mind*; and this *mind* may be confounded with *soule* without any violence or inustice to *Reason* or *Philosophy*: then the *soule* it seemes is enabled by our *body*, not this by it. My *Body* licenseth my *soule* to *see* the Worlds *beauties* through mine *eyes*; to *heare* pleasant things thorough mine *eares*; and affords it apt *Organs* for the conueiance of all perceiuable *delight*. But alas! my *soule* cannot make any *part*, that is not of it selfe disposed, to *see* or *heare*, though without doubt she be as able & as willing to see *behind* as *before*. Now if my *soule* would say, that shee enables any part to tast these *pleasures*, but is her selfe onely delighted with those rich *sweetnesses* which her *inward eyes* and *senses* apprehend, shee should dissemble; for I see her often solaced with *beauties*, which she sees through mine *eyes*, and with *musicke* which through mine *eares* she heares. This *perfection* then my *body* hath, that it can impart to my *mind* all his *pleasures*; and my *mind* hath still many, that she can neither teach my *indisposed* parts her *faculties*, nor to the best *espoused* parts shew it *beauty* of *Angells*, of *Musicke*, of *Sphæres*, whereof she boasts the *Contemplation*. Are *Chastity, Temperance*, and *Fortitude* gifts of the *mind*? I appeale to *Physitians* whether the *cause* of these be not in the *body*; *health* is the gift of the *body*, and *patience* in sicknesse the gift of the *mind*: then who will say that *patience* is as good a happinesse, as *health*, when we must be extreamely *miserable* to purchase this *happinesse*. And for nourishing of *Ciuill societies* and *mutuall loue* amongst Men, which is our *chiefe end* while wee are men; I say, this *beauty, presence,* and *proportion* of the *body*, hath a more *masculine* force in begetting this *loue*, than the *vertues* of the *mind*: for it strikes vs *suddenly*, and possesseth vs *immoderately*; when to know those *vertues* requires some *Iudgement* in him which shall discerne, a *long time* and *conuersation* betweene them. And euen at *last* how much of our *faith* and *beleefe* shall wee bee driuen to bestow, to assure our selues that these *vertues* are not *counterfeited*: for it is the same to *be*, and *seeme vertuous*, because that he that hath *no vertue*, can *dissemble* none, but hee which hath a *little*, may *gild* and *enamell*, yea and transforme much *vice*

into *vertue*: For allow a man to be *discreet* and *flexible* to *complaints,* which are great *vertuous gifts* of the *mind,* this *discretion* will be to him the *soule* and *Elixer* of all *vertues,* so that touched with this, euen *pride* shalbe made *Humility*; and *Cowardice,* honorable and wise *valour*. But in things *seene* there is not this *danger,* for the body which thou louest and esteemest *faire,* is *faire*; certenly if it be not *faire* in perfection, yet it is faire in the same *degree* that thy *Iudgment* is good. And in a *faire body,* I doe seldome suspect a *disproportioned mind,* and as seldome hope for a *good,* in a *deformed*. When I see a *goodly house* I assure my selfe of a worthy possessour, from a *ruinous weather-beaten building* I turne away, because it seemes either stuff'd with *varlets* as a *prison,* or handled by an *vnworthy* and *negligent Tenant,* that so suffers the *waste* thereof. And truly the *gifts* of *Fortune,* which are *riches,* are onely *handmaides,* yea *Pandars* of the *bodies pleasure*; with their seruice wee nourish *health,* and preserue *dainty,* and wee buy *delights*; so that *vertue* which must bee loued for *it selfe,* and respects no further *end,* is indeed *nothing*: And *riches,* whose *end* is the *good* of the *body,* cannot bee so *perfectly good,* as the *end* whereto it leuells.

These eleuen Paradoxes, may bee printed: this fiue and twentieth of October, Anno Domini, *one thousand six hundred thirty and two.*

PROBLEMS

CONTENTS

I. Why haue Bastards best Fortune?
II. Why Puritans make long Sermons?
III. Why did the Diuell reserue Iesuites till these latter dayes.
IV. Why is there more variety of Greene, than of other colours?
V. Why doe young Lay-men so much studie Diuinity.
VI. Why hath the Common Opinion afforded Women soules?
VII. Why are the Fairest, Falsest?
VIII. Why Venus-starre onely doth cast a shadow?
IX. Why is Venus-Starre multi-nominous, called both Hesperus and Vesper?
X. Why are New Officers least oppressing?

I. Why haue Bastards best Fortune?

IS *Nature* (which is *lawes patterne*) hauing denied women *Constancy* to *one*, hath prouided them with *cunning* to allure *many*, and so *Bastards de iure* should haue better *wits* and *experience*. But besides that by *experience* wee see many *fooles* amongst them; we should take from them one of their chiefest helpes to *preferment*, and we should deny them to be *fooles*; and (that which is onely left) that *Women* chuse *worthier* men than their *husbands* is false *de facto*, either then it must be that the *Church* hauing remoued them from all place in the *publike seruice* of *God*, they haue better meanes than others to bee *wicked*, and so *fortunate*: Or else because the two *greatest powers* in this *world*, the *Diuell* and *Princes* concurre to their *greatnesse*; the one giuing *bastardye*, the other *legitimation*: As *nature* frames and conserues great *bodies* of *Contraries*. Or the cause is, because they abound most at *Court*, which is the forge where fortunes are made; or at least the *shop* where they be *sold*.

II. Why Puritans make long Sermons?

IT needs not for *perspicuousnesse*, for God knowes they are plaine enough: nor doe all of them vse *Sem-briefe-Accents* for some of them haue *Crochets* enough. It may be they intend not to rise like *glorious Tapers* and *Torches*, but like *thinne-wretched-sicke-watching-Candles*, which *languish* and are in a diuine *Consumption* from the first minute, yea in their *snuffe*, and *stinke* when others are in their more profitable *glory*. I haue thought sometimes that out of *Conscience*, they allow *long measure* to *course Ware*. And sometimes that *vsurping* in that place a *liberty* to *speake freely* of *Kings*, they would *raigne* as long as they could. But now I thinke they doe it out of a *zealous* Imagination, that, *It is their duty to preach on till their Auditory wake*.

III. Why did the Diuell reserue Iesuites till these latter dayes.

DID hee know that our *Age* would deny the *Diuels possessing,* and therefore prouided by these to *possesse* Men and kingdomes? Or to end the *disputation* of *Schoolemen*, why the *Diuell* could not make *lice* in *Ægypt*; and whether those things he *presented,* there might be *true,* hath he sent vs a *true* and *reall plague*, worse than those *ten*? Or in *ostentation* of the *greatnesse* of his *Kingdome,* which euen *diuision* cannot *shake*, doth he send vs these which *disagree* with all the rest? Or knowing that our *times* should discouer the *Indies*, and abolish their *Idolatry*, doth he send these to giue them *another* for it? Or peraduenture they haue beene in the *Roman Church* these *thousand yeares* though wee haue called them by *other names*.

IV. Why is there more variety of Greene, than of other colours?

IT is because it is the figure of *Youth*, wherein *Nature* would prouide as many *Greene*, as *Youth* hath *Affections*; and so present a *Sea-greene* for *profuse wasters* in *voyages*; a *Grasse-greene* for sudden *new men enobled* from *Grasiers*; and a *Goose-greene* for such *Polititians* as pretend to preserue the *Capitoll*. Or else *Prophetically* foreseeing an *Age* wherein they shall all *hunt*. And for such as *misse-demeane* themselues a *willow-greene*; For *Magistrates* must aswell haue *Fasces* borne before them to *chastize* the *small* offences, as *Secures* to *cut off* the *great*.

V. Why doe young Lay-men so much studie Diuinity.

IS it because others tending busily*Churches preferment* neglect *studie*? Or had the *Church* of *Rome* shut vp all our wayes, till the *Lutherans* broke downe their *vttermost stubborne dores*, and the *Caluinists* picked their *inwardest* and *subtlest lockes*? Surely the *Diuell* cannot be such a Foole to hope that hee shall make this study *contemptible*, by making it *common*. Nor that as the *Dwellers* by the riuer *Origus* are said (by drawing infinite *ditches* to sprinckle their *barren Countrey*) to haue exhausted and intercepted their *maine channel*, and so lost their more profitable course to the *Sea*; so wee, by prouiding euery *ones selfe, diuinity* enough for his *owne vse*, should neglect our *Teachers* and *Fathers*. Hee cannot hope for better *heresies* than he hath had, nor was his *Kingdome* euer so much aduanced by *debating Religion* (though with some *aspersions* of *Error*) as by a *Dull* and *stupid security*, in which many *grosse things* are swallowed. Possible out of such an *Ambition* as we haue now, to speake *plainely* and *fellow-like* with *Lords* and *Kings*, wee thinke also to acquaint our selues with *Gods secrets:* Or perchance when wee study it by *mingling humane* respects, *It is not Diuinity*.

VI. Why hath the Common Opinion afforded Women soules?

IT is agreed that wee haue not so much from them as any *part* of either our *mortall soules* of *sense*, or *growth*; and wee deny *soules* to others equall to them in all but in *speech* for which they are beholding to their *bodily instruments*: For perchance an *Oxes* heart, or a *Goates*, or a *Foxes*, or a *Serpents* would speake iust so, if it were in the *breast*, and could moue that *tongue* and *Iawes*. Haue they so many *aduantages* and *meanes* to hurt vs (for, euer their *louing* destroyed vs) that we dare not *displease* them, but giue them what they will? And so when some call them *Angells*, some *Goddesses*, and the *Palpulian Heretickes* make them *Bishops*, wee descend so much with the streame, to allow them *soules*? Or doe we somewhat (in this dignifying of them) flatter *Princes* and *great personages* that are so much *gouerned* by them? Or doe wee in that *easinesse*, and *prodigality*, wherein wee daily lose our owne *soules* to wee care not whom, so labour to perswade our selues, that sith a *woman* hath a *soule*, a *soule* is no *great matter*? Or doe we lend them *soules* but for *vse*, since they for our sakes, giue their *soules* againe, and their *bodies* to boote? Or perchance because the *Diuell* (who is all *soule*) doth most *mischiefe*, and for *conuenience* and *proportion*, because they would come *neerer* him, wee allow them some *soules*, and so as the *Romans* naturalized some *Prouinces* in reuenge, and made them *Romans*, onely for the *burthen* of the *Commonwealth*; so wee haue giuen *women* soules only to make them capable of *Damnation*?

VII. Why are the Fairest, Falsest?

I Meane not of false *AlchimyBeauty*, for then the *question* should be inuerted, *why are the Falsest, Fairest*? It is not only because they are *much solicited* and *sought* for, so is *gold*, yet it is not so *common*; and this *suite* to them, should teach them their *value*, and make them more *reserued*. Nor is it because the *delicatest blood* hath the *best spirits*, for what is that to the flesh? perchance such *Constitutions* haue the *best wits*, and there is no *proportionable subiect*, for *Womens wit*, but *deceipt*? doth the *mind* so follow the *temperature* of the body, that because those *Complexions* are aprest to change, the mind is therfore so? Or as Bells of the purest metall retaine their *tinckling* and *sound* longest, so the *memory* of the last *pleasure* lasts longer in these, and disposeth them to the next. But sure it is not in the *Complexion*, for those that doe but *thinke* themselues *faire*, are presently inclined to this *multiplicity* of *loues*, which being but *faire in conceipt* are *false in deed:* and so perchance when they are *borne* to this *beauty*, or haue *made* it, or haue *dream'd* it, they easily beleeue all *Addresses* and *Applications* of euery *Man*, out of a *sense* of their owne *worthinesse* to bee directed to them, which others *lesse worthy* in their owne thoughts apprehend not, or discredit. But I thinke the *true reason* is, that being like *Gold* in many properties (as that *all snatch* at them, but the *worst possesse* them, that they care not how *deepe* we dig for them, and that by the *Law* of *Nature, Occupandi conceditur*) they would be like also in this, that as *Gold* to make it selfe of vse admits *Assay*, so they, that they may be *tractable*, *mutable*, and currant, haue to their allay Falshood.

VIII. Why Venus-starre onely doth cast a shadow?

IS it because it is *neerer* the *earth*? But they whose Profession it is to see that nothing be done in heauen without their *consent* (as Re-[?] saies in himselfe of *Astrologers*) haue bid *Mercury* to bee neerer. Is it because the *workes* of *Venus* want *shadowing, couering,* and *disguising*? *But* those of *Mercury* needs it more; for *Eloquence*, his *Occupation*, is all shadow and colours; let our life be a sea, and then our *reason* and *Euen passions* are *wind* enough to carry vs whether we should go, but *Eloquence* is a *storme* and *tempest* that miscarries: and who doubts that *Eloquence* which must perswade *people* to take a *yoke* of *soueraignty* (and then beg and make *lawes* to tye them *faster*,and then giue money to the *Inuention*, repaire and strengthen it) needs more *shadowes* and *colouring*, than to perswaqde any Man or Woman to that which is naturall. And *Venus markets* are so *naturall*, that when we solicite the best way (which is by *marriage*) oue perswasions worke not so much to *draw* a woman *to vs*, as against her *Nature* to draw her *from all other* besides. And so when we goe against *Nature*, and from *Venus-worke* (for *marriage* is *chastity*) we need *shadowes* and *colours*, but not else. In *Seneca's* time it was a course, an *vn-romane* and a *contemptible* thing euen in a *Matrone*, not to haue had a *loue* beside her *husband*, which though the *Law* required not at their hands, yet they did it zealously out of the counsell of *Custome* and *fashion*, which was *venery* of *Supererogation*:

Et te spectator plusquam delectat Adulter,

saith *Martiall*: And *Horace*, because many *lights* would not shew him enough, created many *Images* of the same *Obiect* by *wainscoting* his *chamber* with *looking-glasses*: so that *Venus* flyes not *light*, so much as *Mercury*, who creeping into our *vnderstanding*, our *darkenesse* would bee defeated, if hee were perceiued. Then either this *shaddow* confesseth that same darke *Melancholy Repentance*, which accompanies; or that so *violent fires*, needes some *shadowy* refreshing, and *Intermission*: Or else *light* signifying both *day* and *youth*, and *shadow* both *night* and *Age*, shee pronounceth by this that shee professeth both all *persons* and *times*.

IX. Why is Venus-Starre multi-nominous, called both Hesperus and Vesper?

TH E *Moone* hath as many *names*, but not as she is a *starre*, but as she hath diuers *gouernments*; but *Venus* is *multinominous* to giue example to her *prostitute disciples*, who so often, either to *renew* or *refresh* themselues towards *louers*, or to *disguise* themselues from *Magistrates*, are to take *new names.* It may be she takes *new names* after her many *functions*, for, as she is *Supreme Monarch* of all *Sunnes* at large (which is *Iust*) so is she ioyned in commission with all *Mythologicks*, with *Iuno, Diana,* and all others for *Marriage*. It may bee because of the diuers *names* to her selfe, for her *Affections* haue more *names* than any *vice: scilicet; Pollution, Fornication, Adultery, Lay-Incest, Church-Incest, Rape, Sodomy, Mascupation, Masturbation,* and a thousand others. Perchance her diuers *names* shewed her appliablenesse to diuers men, for *Neptune* distilled and wet her in *Loue*, the *Sunne* warmes and melts her, *Mercury* perswaded and swore her, *Iupiters* authority secur'd, and *Vulcan* hammer'd her. As *Hesperus* she presents you with her *bosom vitale*, because it is *wholesomest* in the morning: As *Vesper* with her *bonum delectabile,* because it is *pleasantest* in the *Euening*. And because *industrious* men rise and indure with the *Sunne* in their *ciuill* businesses, this *starre* calls them vp a little before, and remembers them againe a little after for her businesse; for certainely;

Venit Hesperus, ite capellæ:

was spoken to *louers* in the persons of *Goates.*

X. Why are New Officers least oppressing?

MUST the old Prouerbe, that *Old dogges bite sorest,* bee true in all kind of *dogges*? Me thinkes the fresh *memory* they haue of the *mony* they parted with for the *place*, should hasten them for the *re-imbursing:* And perchance they do but seeme easier to their *suitors*; who (as all other *Patients*) do account all change of paine, easie. But if it bee so, it is either because the sodaine *sense* and *contentment* of the *honour* of the *place*, retards and remits the rage of their *profits*, and so hauing stayed their *stomackes,* they forbeare the second *course* a while: Or hauing ouercome the *steepest* part of the *hill*, and clambered aboue *Competitions* and *Oppositions* they dare loyter, and take breath: Perchance being come from *places*, where they tasted *no gaine,* a *little* seemes *much* to them at first, for it is *long before a Christian conscience ouertakes, or strayes into an Officers heart.* It may be that out of the *generall disease* of all men not to loue the *memory* of a *predecessor,* they seeke to disgrace them by such *easinesse*, and make good *first Impressions,* that so hauing drawne much *water* to their *Mill*, they may afterwards *grind* at ease: For if fro[m] the rules of good *Horse-man-ship,* they thought it wholesome to *jet* out in a moderate *pace*, they should also take vp towards their *Iourney's* end; not mend their *pace* continually, and *gallop* to their *Innes-doore,* the *Graue*; except perchance their *conscience* at that time so touch them, that they thinke it an *Iniury* and *damage* both to him that must *sell*, and to him that must *buy* the *Office* after their *death*; and a kind of *dilapidation* if they by continuing *honest* should discredit the place, and bring it to a *lower-rent,* or *vnder-value.*

The Letters

Anne More, the poet's wife

LIST OF LETTERS

CONTENTS

I. To the worthiest Lady Mrs Bridget White.
II. To the worthiest Lady Mrs B. W.
III. To the same.
IV. To the Honourable Lady Mrs B. W.
V. To the Honourable L. the Lady Kingsmel upon the death of her Husband.
VI. To my honoured friend Sr T. Lucey.
VII. To the Noblest Knight Sr Edward Herbert L. of Cherbury; sent to him with his Book Biathanatos.
VIII. To Sr Robert Carre now Earle of Ankerum, with my Book Biathanatos at my going into Germany.
IX. To the Countesse of Bedford.
X. To the right honourable the Countess of Montgomery.
XI. To Sir H. R. [To Sir H. G.]
XII. To Sir H. G.
XIII. To my worthy and honoured friend Mr George Garet.
XIV. To Mr George Garet.
XV. To Mrs Martha Garet.
XVI. To Sir Thomas Roe.
XVII. To all my friends: Sir H. Goodere.
XVIII. To Sir H. Goodere.
XIX. To Sir H. Goodere.
XX. To the same.
XXI. To Sr H. G.
XXII. SIR,
XXIII. To the Countesse of Bedford.
XXIV. To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.
XXV. To Sir H. G.
XXVI. To Sir G. F.

XXVII. To Sir H. G.
XXVIII. To the Honourable Kt Sr H. Goodere one of the Gent. of his Majesties privy Chamber.
XXIX. To Sr H. G.
XXX. To Sir H. G.
XXXI. To your selfe.
XXXII. To my Lord G. H.
XXXIII. To Sir H. G.
XXXIV. To my very true and very good friend Sir Henry Goodere.
XXXV. To Sr G. M.
XXXVI. To Sr H. G.
XXXVII. To your selfe.
XXXVIII. To Sir H. G.
XXXIX. To my most worthy friend Sir Henry Goodere.
XL. To Sir I. H.
XLI. To Sir H. Wootton.
XLII. To the Honorable Knight Sir H. Goodere.
XLIII. To Sir H. Wotton.
XLIV. A. V. Merced.
XLV. To the best Knight Sir H. Wootton.
XLVI. To Sir H. G.
XLVII. To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.
XLVIII. To the Honourable Knight H. G.
XLIX. To Sir H. G.
L. To the Honourable Sir R. D.
LI. To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.
LII. To his honourable friend Sr H. G.
LIII. To Sr T. H.
LIV. To Sir H. G.
LV. To the Honourable Knight Sir H. G.
LVI. To Sir H. Goodere at Polesworth.
LVII. To the best Knight Sir H. G.
LVIII. To my best of friends Sir H. G.
LIX. To my worthy friend G. K.
LX. To Sir G. B.
LXI. To the Honourable Knight Sir G. P.

LXII. To my much honoured friend Sr T. Lucy.
LXIII. To the honourable Knight Sir H. G.
LXIV. To my good friend Sr H. G.
LXV. To Sir H. G.
LXVI. To the worthy Knight Sir Tho. Lucy.
LXVII. To Sir G. B.
LXVIII. To Sir H. Goodere.
LXIX. To Sir H. G.
LXX. To Sir T. R.
LXXI. To Sir Henry Goodere.
LXXII. To my good friend G. H.
LXXIII. To your self.
LXXIV. To the gallant Knight Sir Tho. Lucy.
LXXV. To Sir H. G.
LXXVI. To Sir H. G.
LXXVII. To Sir G. H.
LXXVIII. To Sir H. G.
LXXIX. To Sir Thomas Lucy.
LXXX. To the honourable Knight Sr Henry Goodere.
LXXXI. To Sir H. G. at Polesworth.
LXXXII. To my worthy friend F. H.
LXXXIII. To Sir H. G.
LXXXIV. To the worthiest Knight Sir Henry Goodere.
LXXXV. To my honoured friend G. G. Esquire.
LXXXVI. To my honoured friend G. G. Esquire.
LXXXVII. SIR,
LXXXVIII. To the Lady G.
LXXXIX. To your selfe.
XC. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
XCI. To your selfe.
XCII. Sir,
XCIII. To my Honoured friend Mr George Gerrard.
XCIV. To my very worthy friend Mr George Gerrard.
XCV. To your selfe.
XCVI. To my Honoured friend M. George Garrat.
XCVII. To your fair sister.

XCVIII. To the Honourable Knight Sir Henry Goodere.
XCIX. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre.
C. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre Gentleman of his Highnesses Bedchamber.
CI. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CII. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CIII. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CIV. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CV. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CVI. To my Honoured Friend, Master George Gherard.
CVII. To my very much honoured friend George Garrard Esquire at Sion.
CVIII. To my very much respected friend Mr. George Garrard.
CIX. To my Honoured friend Mr George Gherard, over against Salisbury house.
CX. To the very much Honoured friend George Garret Esquire.
CXI. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre, Gentleman of his Highnesses Bed-chamber.
CXII. To the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount of Rochester.
CXIII. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre.
CXIV. To your selfe.
CXV. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre, Gentleman of his Highnesses Bed chamber.
CXVI. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CXVII. To the Honoured Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CXVIII. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CXIX. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CXX. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.
CXXI. To your selfe.
CXXII. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre.
CXXIII. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.
CXXIV. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.
CXXV. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.
CXXVI. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.
CXXVII. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.
CXXVIII. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre, at Court.
CXXIX. To my Noble friend M[ris] Cokain at Ashburne.

NOTES

NOTE

The Letters to Severall Persons of Honour, *now for irst time reprinted in their original form, were collected and published by John Donne, Jr., in 1651, twenty years after the death of the author. Apparently the sales were not large, for three years later the original sheets were rebound with a new title page and put on the market as a second edition. Not many copies of the earlier, and still fewer of the later date, have come down to us.*

In the present volume changes from and additions to the original text are indicated by brackets, with a single exception: errors in punctuation have been corrected without comment when, and only when, they seem seriously to impair the intelligibility of the text. In the case of a few letters the reading followed is that of the original manuscripts, for which I am indebted to the great kindness of Mr. Edmund Gosse.

Readers of Mr. Gosse's brilliant study, The Life and Letters of John Donne (*London: Heinemann, 1899*) *will not need to be reminded of the obligations under which he has placed all later students of Donne's life and work. I have, in addition, to thank him for generous encouragement and for many helpful suggestions, specific and general.*

C. E. M., Jr.

Huntington, Long Island
October 14, 1910.

LETTERS TO SEVERALL
PERSONS OF HONOUR

To the most virtuous
and excellent Lady, Mris.
BRIDGET DUNCH.

Madam,

It is an argument of the Immortality *of the* Soul, *that it can apprehend, and imbrace such a* Conception; *and it may be some kinde of* Prophecy *of the continuance and lasting of these* Letters, *that having been scattered, more then Sibyls leaves, I cannot say into parts, but corners of the* World, *they have recollected and united themselves, meeting* at once, *as it were, at the same spring, from whence they flowed, but by* Succession.

*But the piety of Æ*neas *to* Anchises, *with the heat and fervour of his zeale, had been dazelled and extinguished by the fire of* Troy, *and his Father become his Tombe, had not a brighter flame appeared in his* Protection, *and* Venus herself *descended with her embraces, to protect her* Martiall Champion; *so that there is no safer way to give a perpetuity to this remnant of the dead Authour, but by dedicating it to the* Altar *of* Beauty *and* perfection; *and if you, Madam, be but pleased to shed on it one beame of your* Grace *and Favour, that very* Adumbration *will quicken it with a new* Spirit, *and defend it from all fire* (*the fate of most* Letters) *but the last; which, turning these into ashes, shall revive the Authour from his Urne, and put him into a capacity of celebrating you, his* Guardian Angell, *who has protected that part of his Soul, that he left behinde him, his* Fame *and* Reputation.

The courtesies that you conferre upon the living may admit of some allay, by a possibility of a Retaliation; *but what you bestow upon the* Dead *is a Sacrifice to* pure Virtue; *an ungifted Deity, 'tis true, without* Oblation, Altar, *or* Temple, *if she were not enshrined in your* noble brest, *but I must forever become her votary, if it be but for giving me this* Inclination, *and* desire *of being*

Madam
Your most humble servant
Jo. Donne.

A
COLLECTION
of Letters written to severall
Persons of Honour.

I. To the worthiest Lady M^rs^ Bridget White.

Madame,

I Could make some guesse whether souls that go to heaven, retain any memory of us that stay behinde, if I knew whether you ever thought of us, since you enjoyed your heaven, which is your self, at home. Your going away hath made *London* a dead carkasse. A Tearm and a Court do a little spice and embalme it, and keep it from putrefaction, but the soul went away in you: and I think the onely reason why the plague is somewhat slackned is because the place is dead already, and no body left worth the killing. Wheresoever you are, there is *London* enough: and it is a diminishing of you to say so, since you are more then the rest of the world. When you have a desire to work a miracle, you will return hither, and raise the place from the dead, and the dead that are in it; of which I am one, but that a hope that I have a room in your favour keeps me alive, which you shall abundantly confirme to me, if by one letter you tell me that you have received my six; for now my letters are grown to that bulk, that I may divide them like *Amadis* the *Gaules* book, and tell you that this is the first letter of the second part of the first book.

Your humblest, and affectionate
servant J. D.

Strand, *S.* Peters
day at nine.

II. To the worthiest Lady M^rs^ B. W.

Madame,

I Think the letters which I send to you single lose themselves by the way for want of a guide, or faint for want of company. Now, that on your part there be no excuse, after three single letters, I send three together, that every one of them may have two witnesses of their delivery. They come also to waite upon another letter from S^r^ *E. Herbert*, of whose recovery from a Fever, you may apprehend a perfecter contentment then we, because you had none of the former sorrow. I am an Heretique if it be sound Doctrine, that pleasure tasts best after sorrow. For my part, I can love health well enough, though I be never sick; and I never needed my Mistris frowns and disfavours, to make her favours acceptable to me. In States, it is a weakness to stand upon a defensive war, and safer not to be invaded, then to have overcome: so in our souls health, an innocence is better then the heartiest repentance. And in the pleasures of this life, it is better that the variety of the pleasures give us the taste and appetite to it, then a sowre and sad interruption quicken our stomack; for then we live by Physick. I wish therefore all your happinesses such as this intire, and without flaw, or spot of discontentment; and such is the love and service of

Your humblest and affectionatest
servant J. D.

Strand S. Peters
day at 4.

III. To the same.

Madame,

This letter which I send enclosed hath been yours many moneths, and hath languished upon my table for a passage so long, that as others send news in their letters, I send an antiquity in mine. I durst not tear it, after it was yours: there is some sacriledge in defacing any thing consecrated to you, and some impiety to despaire that any thing devoted to you should not be reserved to a good issue. I remember I should have sent it by a servant, of whose diligence I see I was too confident. I know not what it says: but I dare make this letter no longer, because being very sure that I always think the same thoughts of you, I am afraid I should fall upon the same words, and so send one letter twice together.

Your very affectionate
servant J. D.

Novemb. 8.

IV. To the Honourable Lady M^rs^ B. W.

Madame,

I Have but small comfort in this letter; the messenger comes too easily to me, and I am too sure that the letter shall be delivered. All adventures towards you should be of more difficulty and hazard. But perchance I need not lament this; it may be so many of my letters are lost already that it is time that one should come, like *Jobs* servant, to bring word that the rest were lost. If you have had more before, this comes to aske how they were received; and if you have had none, it comes to try how they should have been received. It comes to you like a bashfull servant, who, though he have an extreme desire to put himself in your presence, yet hath not much to say when he is come: yet hath it as much to say as you can think; because what degrees soever of honour, respect, and devotion you can imagine or beleeve to be in any, this letter tells you that all those are in me towards you. So that for this letter you are my Secretary; for your worthiness, and your opinion that I have a just estimation of them [?it], write it: so that it is as long, and as good, as you think it; and nothing is left to me, but, as a witness, to subscribe the name of

Your most humble servant

J. D.

Though this letter be yours, it will not misbecome or disproportion it that I mention your Noble brother, who is gone to *Cleave*, not to return till towards Christmas, except the business deserve him not so long.

V. To the Honourable L. the Lady Kingsmel upon the death of her Husband.

Madame,

Those things which God dissolves at once, as he shall do the Sun, and Moon, and those bodies at the last conflagration, he never intends to reunite again; but in those things, which he takes in pieces, as he doth man, and wife, in these divorces by death, and in single persons, by the divorce of body and soul, God hath another purpose to make them up again. That piece which he takes to himself, is presently cast in a mould, and in an instant made fit for his use; for heaven is not a place of a proficiency, but of present perfection. That piece which he leaves behinde in this world, by the death of a part thereof, growes fitter and fitter for him, by the good use of his corrections, and the intire conformity to his will. Nothing disproportions us, nor makes us so uncapable of being reunited to those whom we loved here, as murmuring, or not advancing the goodness of him, who hath removed them from hence. We would wonder, to see a man, who in a wood were left to his liberty, to fell what trees he would, take onely the crooked, and leave the streightest trees; but that man hath perchance a ship to build, and not a house, and so hath use of that kinde of timber: let not us, who know that in Gods house there are many Mansions, but yet have no modell, no designe of the forme of that building, wonder at his taking in of his materialls, why he takes the young, and leaves the old, or why the sickly overlive those that had better health. We are not bound to think that souls departed, have devested all affections towards them, whom they left here; but we are bound to think, that for all their loves they would not be here again: Then is the will of God done in Earth, as it is in Heaven, when we neither pretermit his actions, nor resist them; neither pass them over in an inconsideration, as though God had no hand in them, nor go about to take them out of his hands, as though we could direct him to do them better. As Gods Scriptures are his will, so his actions are his will; both are Testaments, because they testifie his minde to us. It is not lawfull to adde a scedule to either of his wills: as they do ill, who adde to his written will, the Scriptures, a scedule of Ap[o]cryphall books, so do they also, who to his other will, his manifested actions, adde Apocryphall conditions, and a scedule of such limitations as these, If God would have stayed thus long, or, If God would

have proceeded in this or this manner, I could have born it. To say that our afflictions are greater then we can bear, is so near to despairing, as that the same words express both; for when we consider *Caines* words in that originall tongue in which God spake, we cannot tell whether the words be, My punishment is greater then can be born; or, My sin is greater then can be forgiven. But, Madame, you who willingly sacrificed your self to God, in your obedience to him, in your own sickness, cannot be doubted to dispute with him about any part of you which he shall be pleased to require at your hands. The difference is great in the loss of an arme, or a head; of a child, or a husband: but to them, who are incorporated into Christ, their head, there can be no beheading; upon you, who are a member of the spouse of Christ, the Church, there can fall no widowhead, nor orphanage upon those children to whom God is father. I have not another office by your husbands death, for I was your Chaplaine before, in my daily prayers; but I shall inlarge that office with other Collects then before, that God will continue to you, that peace which you have ever had in him, and send you quiet, and peaceable dispositions in all them with whom you shall have any thing to do in your temporall estate and matters of this world. *Amen.*

Your Ladiships very humble and
thankfull servant in Christ
Jesus J. Donne.

At my poor house at S.
Pauls. 26. Octob. 1624.

VI. To my honoured friend S^r^ T. Lucey.

SIR,

I Make account that this writing of letters, when it is with any seriousness, is a kind of extasie, and a departure and secession and suspension of the soul, w^ch^ doth then cõmunicate itself to two bodies: And, as I would every day provide for my souls last convoy, though I know not when I shall die, and perchance I shall never die, so for these extasies in letters, I oftentimes deliver my self over in writing when I know not when those letters shall be sent to you, and many times they never are, for I have a little satisfaction in seeing a letter written to you upon my table, though I meet no opportunity of sending it. Especially this summer, when either by my early retiring home, or your irresolutions of your own purposes, or some other possessions of yours, you did lesse reveale to me your progresses, and stations, and where I might crosse you by letters, then heretofore: I make shift to lay little fault upon you, because my pardon might be easier, if I transgress into a longer and busier letter then your Countrey sports admit; but you may read it in winter: And by that time I may more clearly express my self for those things which have entred into me, concerning your soul: for as the greatest advantage which mans soul is thought to have beyond others, is that which they call *Actum reflexum*, and *iteratum*, (for Beasts do the same things as we do, but they do not consider nor remember the circumstances and inducements, and by what power and faculty it is that they do them) so of those which they call *Actum reflexum* the noblest is that which reflects upon the soul itself, and considers and meditates it. Into which considerations when I walke after my slow and unperfect pace, I begin to think that as litigious men tryed with suits admit any arbitrement; and Princes travailed with long and wastfull war descend to such conditions of peace, as they are soon after ashamed to have embraced: so Philosophers, and so all sects of Christians, after long disputations and controversies, have allowed many things for positive and dogmaticall truths which are not worthy of that dignity. And so many doctrines have grown to be the ordinary diet and food of our spirits, and have place in the pap of Catechismes, which were admitted but as Physick in that present distemper, or accepted in a lazie weariness, when men, so they might have something to relie upon, and to excuse themselves from more painfull inquisition,

never examined what that was. To which indisposition of ours the Casuists are so indulgent, as that they allow a conscience to adhere to any probable opinion against a more probable, and do never binde him to seek out which is the more probable, but give him leave to dissemble it and to depart from it, if by mischance he come to know it. This, as it appears in all sciences, so most manifestly in Physick, which for a long time considering nothing, but plain curing and that but by example and precedent, the world at last longed for some certain Canons and Rules, how these cures might be accomplished; And when men are inflamed with this desire, and that such a fire breaks out, that it rages and consumes infinitly by heat of argument, except some of authority interpose. This produced *Hippocrates* his Aphorismes; and the world slumbred or took breath in his resolution divers hundreds of years: And then in *Galens* time, which was not satisfied with the effect of curing, nor with the knowledge how to cure, broke out another desire of finding out the causes why those simples wrought those effects. Then *Galen* rather to stay their stomachs then that he gave them enough, taught them the qualities of the four Elements, and arrested them upon this, that all differences of qualities proceeded from them. And after (not much before our time), men perceiving that all effects in Physick could not be derived from these beggerly and impotent properties, of the Elements, and that therefore they were driven often to that miserable refuge of specifique form, and of antipathy and sympathy, we see the world hath turned upon new principles which are attributed to *Paracelsus*, but (indeed) too much to his honour. Certainly it is also so in the Physick of our soul, Divinity, for in the Primitive Church when amongst the Fathers there were so divers opinions of the state of the soul, presently after this life, they easily inclined to be content to do as much for them dead as when they were alive, and so concurred in a charitable disposition to pray for them; which manner of prayer then in use no Christian Church at this day, having rereived better light, will allow of. So also when in the beginning of S. *Augustines* time Grace had been so much advanced that mans Nature was scarce admitted to be so much as any means or instrument (not onely no kinde of cause) of his own good works: And soon after in S. *Augustines* time also mans free will (by fierce opposition and arguing against the former error) was too much overvalued, and admitted into too near degrees of fellowship with Grace; those times admitted a doctrine and form of reconciliation, which though for reverence to the time, both the Dominicans and Jesuits at this day in

their great quarrell about Grace and Free will would yet seem to maintaine, yet indifferent and dispassioned men of that Church see there is no possibility in it, and therefore accuse it of absurdity and almost of heresie. I think it falls out thus also in the matter of the soul: for Christian Religion presuming a soul, and intending principally her happiness in the life to come, hath been content to accept any way which hath been obtruded, how this soul is begun in us. Hence it is that whole Christian Churches arest themselves upon propagation from parents; and other whole Christian Churches allow onely infusion from God. In both which opinions there appear such infirmities as it is time to look for a better: for whosoever will adhere to the way of propagation can never evict necessarily and certainly a naturall immortality in the soul, if the soul result out of matter, nor shall he ever prove that all mankind hath any more then one soul: as certainly of all beasts, if they receive such souls as they have from their parents, every species can have but one soul. And they which follow the opinion of infusion from God, and of a new creation, (which is now the more common opinion), as they can very hardly defend the doctrin of original sin (the soul is forced to take this infection, and comes not into the body of her own disposition), so shall they never be able to prove that all those whom we see in the shape of men have an immortall and reasonable soul, because our parents are as able as any other species is to give us a soul of growth and of sense, and to perform all vitall and animall functions, and so without infusion of such a soul may produce a creature as wise and well disposed as any horse or Elephant, of which degree many whom we see come far short; nor hath God bound or declared himself that he will always create a soul for every embryon, there is yet therefore no opinion in Philisophy, nor Divinity, so well established as constrains us to beleeve, both that the soul is immortall, and that every particular man hath such a soul: which since out of the great mercy of our God we do constantly beleeve, I am ashamed that we do not also know it by searching farther: But as sometimes we had rather beleeve a Travellers lie then go to disprove him, so men rather cleave to these ways then seek new: yet because I have meditated therein, I will shortly acquaint you with what I think; for I would not be in danger of that law of *Moses*, That if a man dig a pit, and cover it not, he must recompense those which are damnified by it: which is often interpreted of such as shake old opinions, and do not establish new as certain but leave consciences in a worse danger then they found them in. I beleeve that law of *Moses* hath in it

some mysterie and appliablenesse; for by that law men are onely then bound to that indemnity and compensation, if an Oxe or an Asse (that is, such as are of a strong constitution and accustomed to labour) fall therein; but it is not said so, if a Sheep or a Goat fall: no more are we, if men in a sillinesse or wantonnesse will stumble or take a scandall, bound to rectifie them at all times. And therefore because I justly presume you strong and watchful enough, I make account that I am not obnoxious to that law, since my meditations are neither too wide nor too deep for you, except onely that my way of expressing them may be extended beyond your patience and pardon, which I will therefore tempt no longer at this time.

Your very affectionate friend
and servant and lover
I. Donne.

From *Micham*, my
close prison ever
since I saw you,
9 Octob.

VII. To the Noblest Knight S^{r} Edward Herbert L. of Cherbury; sent to him with his Book Biathanatos.

SIR,

I Make accompt that this book hath enough performed that which it undertook, both by argument and example. It shall therefore the lesse need to be it self another example of the Doctrine. It shall not therefore kill it self; that is, not bury it self; for if it should do so, those reasons, by which that act should be defended or excused were also lost with it. Since it is content to live, it cannot chuse a wholsomer aire then your Library, where Authors of all complexions are presented. If any of them grudge this book a room, and suspect it of new or dangerous doctrine, you who know us all, can best moderate. To those reasons which I know your love to me will make in my favour and discharge, you may adde this, that though this doctrine hath not been taught nor defended by writers, yet they, most of any sort of men in the world, have practised it.

Your very true and earnest freind
and servant and lover
J. Donne.

VIII. To Sr Robert Carre now Earle of Ankerum, with my Book Biathanatos at my going into Germany.

SIR,

I Had need do somewhat towards you above my promises; How weak are my performances, when even my promises are defective? I cannot promise, no not in mine own hopes, equally to your merit towards me. But besides the Poems, of which you took a promise, I send you another Book to which there belongs this History. It was written by me many years since; and because it is upon a misinterpretable subject, I have always gone so near suppressing it, as that it is onely not burnt: no hand hath passed upon it to copy it, nor many eyes to read it: onely to some particular friends in both Universities, then when I writ it, I did communicate it: And I remember, I had this answer, That certainly, there was a false thread in it, but not easily found: Keep it, I pray, with the same jealousie; let any that your discretion admits to the sight of it, know the date of it; and that it is a Book written by *Jack Donne*, and not by D[r]. *Donne*: Reserve it for me, if I live, and if I die, I only forbid it the Presse, and the Fire: publish it not, but yet burn it not; and between those, do what you will with it. Love me still, thus farre, for your own sake, that when you withdraw your love from me, you will finde so many unworthinesses in me, as you grow ashamed of having had so long, and so much, such a thing as

Your poor servant in Chr. Jes.
J. Donne.

IX. To the Countesse of Bedford.

Madam,

Amongst many other dignities which this letter hath by being received and seen by you, it is not the least, that it was prophesied of before it was born: for your brother told you in his letter, that I had written: he did me much honour both in advancing my truth so farre as to call a promise an act already done; and to provide me a means of doing him a service in this act, which is but doing right to my self: for by this performance of mine own word, I have also justified that part of his Letter which concerned me; and it had been a double guiltinesse in me, to have made him guilty towards you. It makes no difference that this came not the same day, nor hears the same date as his; for though in inheritances and worldly possessions we consider the dates of Evidences, yet in Letters, by which we deliver over our affections, and assurances of friendship, and the best faculties of our souls, times and daies cannot have interest, nor be considerable, because that which passes by them, is eternall, and out of the measure of time. Because therefore it is the office of this Letter, to convey my best wishes, and all the effects of a noble love unto you, (which are the best fruits that so poor a soil, as my poor soul is, can produce) you may be pleased to allow the Letter thus much of the souls privilege, as to exempt it from straitnesse of hours, or any measure of times, and so beleeve it came then. And for my part, I shall make it so like my soul, that as that affection, of which it is the messenger, begun in me without my knowing when, any more then I know when my soul began; so it shall continue as long as that.

Your most affextionate friend and servant

J. D.

X. To the right honourable the Countess of Montgomery.

MADAM,
Of my ability to doe your Ladiship service, any thing spoken may be an embleme good enough; for as a word vanisheth, so doth any power in me to serve you; things that are written are fitter testimonies, because they remain and are permanent: in writing this Sermon which your Ladiship was pleased to hear before, I confesse I satisfie an ambition of mine own, but it is the ambition of obeying your commandment, not onely an ambition of leaving my name in your memory, or in the your Cabinet: and yet, since I am going out of the Kingdom, and perchance out of the world, (when God shall have given my soul a place in heaven) it shall the lesse diminish your Ladiship, if my poor name be preserved about you. I know what dead carkasses things written are, in respect of things spoken. But in things of this kinde, that soul that inanimates them, never departs from them: The Spirit of God that dictates them in the speaker or writer, and is present in his tongue or hand meets himself again (as we meet our selves in a glass) in the eies and ears and hearts of the hearers and readers: and that Spirit, which is ever the same to an equall devotion, makes a writing and a speaking equall means to edification. In one circumstance, my preaching and my writing this Sermon is too equall: that that your Ladiship heard in a hoarse voyce then, you read in a course hand now: but in thankfulnesse I shall lift up my hands as clean as my infirmities can keep them, and a voyce as clear as his spirit shall be pleased to tune in my prayers for your Ladyship in all places of the world, which shall either sustain or bury

Your Ladiships humble servant
in Christ Iesus
J. D.

XI. To Sir H. R. [To Sir H. G.]

If a whole year be but *Annus ab Annulo*, because it returns into it self, what *Annululus* shall be diminutive enough, to express our weekly revolutions? In chaines the least linkes have most curiosity, but that can be no emblem of us: but they have also the most strength, and that may. The first sphere onely which is resisted by nothing, absolves his course every day; and so doth true friendship well placed, often iterate in act or purpose, the same offices. But as the lower spheres, subject to the violence of that, and yet naturally encouraged to a reluctation against it, have therefore many distractions, and eccentricities, and some trepidations, and so return but lamely, and lately to the same place, and office: so that friendship which is not moved primarily by the proper intelligence, discretion, and about the naturell center, vertue, doth perchance sometimes, some things, somewhat like true friendship; but hath many deviations, which are strayings into new loves, (not of other men; for that is proper to true wise friendship, which is not a marr[y]ing; but of other things) and hath such trepidations as keep it from shewing it self, where great persons do not love; and it returns to the true first station and place of friendship planetarily, which is uncertainly and seldome. I have ever seen in *London* and our Court, as some colours, and habits, and continuances, and motions, and phrases, and accents, and songs, so friends in fashion and in season: and I have seen them as sodainly abandoned altogether, though I see no change in them, nor know more why they were left, then why they were chosen. To do things by example, and upon confidence of anothers judgment may be some kinde of a second wisdome; but it is but writing by a copy: or indeed it is the hardest of all, and the issue of the first wisdome, for I cannot know that this example should be followed, except I knew that it is good, and so I judge my Judge. Our assent therefore, and arrest, must be upon things, not persons. And when we are sure we are in the right way, for great persons, we may be glad of their company, if they go our way; we may for them change our place, but not our end, nor our way, if there be but one, us [as] in Religion. In persevering in it, it concerns as [us] much what our companions be, but very much what our friends. In which I know I speak not dangerously nor mis-appliably to you, as though I averted you from any of those friends, who are of other impressions then you or I in some great circumstances of

Religion. You know I never fettered nor imprisoned the word Religion; not straightning it Frierly, *ad Religiones factitias*, (as the *Romans* call well their orders of Religion) nor immuring it in a *Rome*, or a *Wittemberg*, or a *Geneva*; they are all virtuall beams of one Sun, and wheresoever they finde clay hearts, they harden them, and moulder them into dust; and they entender and mollifie waxen. They are not so contrary as the North and South Poles; and that [?] they are connaturall pieces of one circle. Religion is Christianity, which being too spirituall to be seen by us, doth therefore take an apparent body of good life and works, so salvation requires an honest Christian. These are the two Elements, and he which elemented from these, hath the complexion of a good man, and a fit friend. The diseases are, too much intention into indiscreet zeal, and too much remisnesse and negligence by giving scandall: for our condition and state in this, is as infirm as in our bodies; where physitians consider only two degrees; sicknesse, and neutrality; for there is no health in us. This, Sir, I use to say to you, rather to have so good a witnesse and corrector of my meditations, then to advise; and yet to do that too, since it is pardonable in a friend: Not to slack you towards those friends which are religious in other clothes then we; (for *Amici vitia si feras facis tua*, is true of such faults) but to keep you awake against such as the place where you must live will often obtrude, which are not onely naked, without any fashion of such garments, but have neither the body of Religion, which is morall honestly, and sociable faithfulness, nor the soul, Christianity. I know not how this paper scaped last week which I send now; I was so sure that I enwrapped it then, that I should be so still, but that I had but one copy; forgive it as you use to do. From *Micham* in as much haste, and with as ill Pen and Inke, as the letter can accuse me of; but with the last and the next weeks heart and affection.

Yours very truely and affectionately

J. Donne.

XII. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

This letter hath more merit, then one of more diligence, for I wrote it in my bed, and with much pain. I have occasion to sit late some nights in my study, (which your books make a prety library) and now I finde that that room hath a wholesome emblematique use: for having under it a vault, I make that promise me, that I shall die reading, since my book and a grave are so near. But it hath another unwholesomenesse, that by raw vapors rising from thence, (for I can impute it to nothing else) I have contracted a sicknesse which I cannot name nor describe. For it hath so much of a continuall Cramp, that it wrests the sinews, so much of a Tetane, that it withdraws and puls the mouth, and so much of the Gout, (which they whose counsell I use, say it is) that it is not like to be cured, though I am too hasty in three days to pronounce it. If it be the Gout, I am miserable; for that affects dangerous parts, as my neck and brest, and (I think fearfully) my stomach, but it will not kill me yet; I shall be in this world, like a porter in a great house, ever nearest the door, but seldomest abroad: I shall have many things to make me weary, and yet not get leave to be gone. If I go, I will provide by my best means that you suffer not for me, in your bonds. The estate which I should leave behinde me of any estimation, is my poor fame, in the memory of my friends, and therefore I would be curious of it, and provide that they repent not to have loved me. Since my imprisonment in my bed, I have made a meditation in verse, which I call a Litany; the word you know imports no other then supplication, but all Churches have one forme of supplication, by that name. Amongst ancient annals (I mean some 800 years) I have met two Letanies in Latin verse, which gave me not the reason of my meditations, for in good faith I thought not upon them then, but they give me a defence, if any man to a Lay man, and a private, impute it as a fault, to take such divine and publique names, to his own little thoughts. The first of these was made by *Ratpertus* a Monk of *Suevia*; and the other by *S. Notker*, of whom I will give you this note by the way, that he is a private Saint, for a few Parishes; they were both but Monks, and the Letanies poor and barbarous enough; yet Pope *Nicolas* the 5, valued their devotion so much, that he canonized both their Poems, and commanded them for publike service in their Churches: mine is for lesser Chappels,

which are my friends, and though a copy of it were due to you, now, yet I am so unable to serve my self with writing it for you at this time, (being some 30 staves of 9 lines) that I must intreat you to take a promise that you shall have the first, for a testimony of that duty which I owe to your love, and to my self, who am bound to cherish it by my best offices. That by which it will deserve best acceptation, is, That neither the Roman Church need call it defective, because it abhors not the particular mention of the blessed Triumphers in heaven; nor the Reformed can discreetly accuse it, of attributing more then a rectified devotion ought to doe. The day before I lay down, I was at *London* where I delivered your Letter for S^{r} *Ed. Conway*, and received another for you, with the copy of my Book, of which it is impossible for me to give you a copy so soon, for it is not of much lesse then 300 pages. If I die, it shall come to you in that fashion that your Letter desires it. If I warm again, (as I have often seen such beggers as my indisposition is, end themselves soon, and the patient as soon) you and I shal speak together of that, before it be too late to serve you in that commandment. At this time I onely assure you, that I have not appointed it upon any person, nor ever purposed to print it: which later perchance you thought, and grounded your request thereupon. A Gent. that visited me yesterday told me that our Church hath lost M^{r} *Hugh Broughton*, who is gone to the Roman side. I have known before, that *Serarius* the Jesuit was an instrument from Cardinall *Baronius* to draw him to *Rome*, to accept a stipend, onely to serve the Christian Churches in controversies with the Jews, without indangering himself to change of his perswasion in particular deductions between these Christian Churches, or being enquired of, or tempted thereunto. And I hope he is no otherwise departed from us. If he be, we shall not escape scandall in it; because, though he be a man of many distempers, yet when he shall come to eat assured bread, and to be removed from partialities, to which want drove him, to make himself a reputation, and raise up favourers; you shall see in that course of opposing the Jews, he will produce worthy things: and our Church will perchance blush to have lost a Souldier fit for that great battell; and to cherish onely those single Duellisms, between *Rome* and *England*, or that more single, and almost self-homicide, between the unconformed Ministers, and Bishops. I writ to you last week that the plague increased; by which you may see that my Letters — — — — opinion of the song, not that I make such trifles for praise; but because as long as you speak comparatively of it with mine own,

and not absolutely, so long I am of your opinion even at this time; when I humbly thank God, I ask & have, his comfort of sadder meditations; I doe not condemn in my self, that I have given my wit such evaporations, as those, if they be free from prophaneness, or obscene provocations. S^{r}, you would pity me if you saw me write, and therefore will pardon me if I write no more: my pain hath drawn my head so much awry, and holds it so, that mine eie cannot follow mine hand: I receive you therefore into my prayers, with mine own weary soul, and commend my self to yours. I doubt not but next week I shall be good news to you, for I have mending or dying on my side, which is two to one. If I continue thus, I shall have comfort in this, that my B. Saviour exercising his Justice upon my two worldly parts, my fortune, and body, reserves all his mercy for that which best tasts it, and most needs it, my soul. I professe to you truly, that my lothnesse to give over now, seems to my self an ill sign, that I shall write no more.

Your poor friend, and Gods poor patient,

Jo. Donne.

XIII. To my worthy and honoured friend M^{r} George Garet.

Sir,

I Am sorry, if your care of me have made you importune to any body else; yet I cannot be very sorry because it gives new testimonies of your favour to me, of which I shall ever be very glad, and (that which is my onely vertue) thankfull: so desperate fortunes as mine may well make friends loth to doe curtesies, because an inability in deserving or requiring takes from them the honour of having done a curtesie, and leaves it but the poor name of an alms; and alms may be given in easier proportions, and more meritoriously. But S^{r}, by what name or weight soever you esteem this kindnesse which you have done me, I value it so, as might alone perswade me of your care of me; in recompense of which, you must be pleased to accept new assurances that I am

Your very affectionate servant,

J. Donne.

I pray let my service be
presented by you to
M^{r} Roope.

XIV. To Mr George Garet.

Sir,

I Have not received that Letter, which by this, I perceive you sent to *London*; if there were anything in that, by which I might have taken occasion to have done you service before this time, I have a double reason of grief for the want of it. I came from thence upon *Thursday*, where I left Sir *Tho. Roe* so indulgent to his sorrow, as it had been an injury to have interrupted it with my unusefull company. I have done nothing of that kinde as your Letter intimates, in the memory of that good Gentlewoman; if I had, I should not finde any better use of it, then to put it into your hands. You teach me what I owe her memory; and if I pay that debt so, you have a part and interest in it, by doing me the honour of remembring it: and therefore it must come quickly to you. I hope not for return from Court, till I come thither; which if I can be master of my self, or servant to my self, which I think is all one, I hope to do some ten daies hence, making it my way to the *Bathe*. If you find any there that have not forgot my name, continue me in their favour, and hold in your self a firm assurance that I am

Your affectionate servant

J. Donne.

XV. To Mrs Martha Garet.

Madame,

Though there be much merit, in the favour your brother hath done me in a visit, yet that which doth enrich and perfect it, is, that he brought you with him; which he doth, as well by letting me see how you do, as by giving me occasions, and leave to talk with you by this Letter: if you have any servant, which wishes you better then I, it must be because he is able to put his wishes into a better frame, and expresse them better, and understand proportion, and greatnesse better then I. I am willing to confesse my impotencie; which is, that I know no wish good enough for you; if any doe, my advantage is, that I can exceed his, by adding mine to it. You must not think that I begin to think thus, when you begin to hear it, by a Letter; As sometimes by the changing of the winde, you begin to hear a Trumpet, which sounded long before you heard it; so are these thoughts of you familiar and ordinary in me, though they have seldome the help of this conveyance to your knowledge: I am loth to leave; for as long as in any fashion, I can have your brother and you here, you make my house a kinde of Dorvey [Dorney]; but since I cannot stay you here, I will come thither to you; which I do, by wrapping up in this paper, the heart of

Your most affectionate servant

J. Donne.

XVI. To Sir Thomas Roe.

SIR,

It is an ease to your friends abroad, that you are more a man of businesse then heretofore; for now it were an injury to trouble you with a busie Letter. But by the same reason I were inexcusable if I should not write at all, since the lesse, the more acceptable; therefore, Sir, though I have no more to say, but to renew the obligations I have towards you, and to continue my place in your love, I would not forbear to tell you so. If I shall also tell you, that when this place affords any thing worth your hearing, I will be your relator, I think I take so long a day, as you would forget the debt, it appears yet to be so barren. Howsoever with every commodity, I shall say something, though it be but a descant upon this plain song, that I am

Your affectionate servant

J. Donne.

XVII. To all my friends: Sir H. Goodere.

SIR,

I Am not weary of writing; it is the course but durable garment of my love; but I am weary of wanting you. I have a minde like those bodies, which have hot Livers, and cold stomachs; or such a distemper as travelled me at *Paris*; a Fever, and dysentery: in which that which is physick to one infirmity, nourishes the other. So I abhor nothing more then sadnesse, except the ordinary remedy, change of company. I can allow my self to be *Animal sociale*, appliable to my company, but not *gregale*, to herd my self in every troup. It is not perfectly true which a very subtil, yet very deep wit *Averroes* says, that all mankinde hath but one soul, which informes and rules us all, as one Intelligence doth the firmament and all the Starres in it; as though a particular body were too little an organ for a soul to play upon. And it is as imperfect which is taught by that religion w^{ch} is most accommodate to sense (I dare not say to reason (though it have appearance of that too) because none may doubt but that that religion is certainly best, which is reasonablest) That all mankinde hath one protecting Angel; all Christians one other, all English one other, all of one Corporation and every civill coagulation or society one other; and every man one other. Though both these opinions expresse a truth; which is, that mankinde hath very stronge bounds to cohabit and concurre in other then mountains and hills during his life. First, common, and mutuall necessity of one another; and therefore naturally in our defence and subventions we first flie to our selves; next, to that which is likest, other men. Then, naturall and inborn charity, beginning at home, which perswades us to give, that we may receive: And legall charity, which makes us also forgive. Then an ingraffing in one another, and growing together by a custome of society: and last of all, strict friendship, in which band men were so presumed to be coupled, that our Confessor King had a law, that if a man be killed, the murderer shall pay a sum *felago suo*, which the interpreters call, *fide ligato, et comite vitæ*. All these bands I willingly receive, for no man is lesse of himself then I: nor any man enough of himself. To be so, is all one with omnipotence. And it is well marked, that in the holy Book, wheresoever they have rendered Almighty, the word is Self-sufficient. I think sometimes that the having a family should remove me farre from the curse of *Væ soli*. But in so strict

obligation of Parent, or Husband, or Master, (and perchance it is so in the last degree of friendship) where all are made one, I am not the lesse alone, for being in the midst of them. Therefore this *oleum lætitiæ*, this balme, of our lives, this alacrity which dignifies even our service to God, this gallant enemy of dejection and sadnesse, (for which and wickednesse the Italian allows but one word, *Triste*: And in full condemnation whereof it was prophesied of our blessed Saviour, *Non erit tristis*, in his conversation) must be sought and preserved diligently. And since it grows without us, we must be sure to gather it from the right tree. They which place this alacrity only in a good conscience, deal somewhat too roundly with us, for when we aske the way, they shew us the town afar off: Will a Physitian consulted for health and strength, bid you have good sinews and equall temper? It is true, that this conscience is the resultance of all other particular actions; it is our triumph and banquet in the haven; but I would come towards that also, (as Mariners say) with a merry winde. Our nature is Meteorique, we respect (because we partake so) both earth and heaven, for as our bodies glorified shall be capable of spirituall joy, so our souls demerged into those bodies, are allowed to partake earthly pleasure. Our soul is not sent hither, only to go back again: we have some errand to do here: nor is it sent into prison, because it comes innocent: and he which sent it, is just. As we may not kill our selves, so we may not bury our selves: which is done or endangered in a dull Monastique sadnesse, which is so much worse then jolity (for upon that word I durst — — — — And certainly despair is infinitely worse, then presumption: both because this is an excesse of love, that of fear; and because this is up, that down the hill; easier, and more stumbling. Heaven is expressed by singing, hell by weeping. And though our blessed Saviour be never noted to have laughed, yet his continuance [countenance] is said ever to be smiling. And that even moderate mirth of heart, and face, and [is] all I wish to my self; and perswade you to keep. This alacrity is not had by a general charity and equanimity to all mankinde, for that is to seek fruit in a wildernesse: nor from a singular friend, for that is to ketch it out of your own pocket: but the various and abundant grace of it, is good company. In which no rank, no number, no quality, but ill, and such a degree of that as may corrupt and poyson the good, is exempt. For in nearer then them, your friend, and somewhat nearer then he, in your self you must allow some inordinatenesse of affections and passions. For it is not true that they are not natural, but stormes and tempests of our bloud and humours: for they are

naturall, but sickly. And as the Indian priests expressed an excellent charity, by building Hospitalls and providing chirurgery for birds and beasts lamed by mischance, or age, or labour: so must we, not cut off, but cure these affections, which are the bestiall part.

XVIII. To Sir H. Goodere.

SIR,

Every tuesday I make account that I turn a great hour-glass, and consider that a weeks life is run out since I writ. But if I aske my self what I have done in the last watch, or would do in the next, I can say nothing; if I say that I have passed it without hurting any, so may the Spider in my window. The primitive Monkes were excusable in their retirings and enclosures of themselves: for even of them every one cultivated his own garden and orchard, that is, his soul and body, by meditation, and manufactures; and they ought the world no more since they consumed none of her sweetnesse, nor begot others to burden her. But for me, if I were able to husband all my time so thriftily, as not onely not to wound my soul in any minute by actuall sinne, but not to rob and cousen her by giving any part to pleasure or businesse, but bestow it all upon her in meditation, yet even in that I should wound her more, and contract another guiltinesse: As the Eagle were very unnaturall if because she is able to do it, she should pearch a whole day upon a tree, staring in contemplation of the majestie and glory of the Sun, and let her young Eglets starve in the nest. Two of the most precious things which God hath afforded us here, for the agony and exercise of our sense and spirit, which are a thirst and inhiation after the next life, and a frequency of prayer and meditation in this, are often envenomed, and putrefied, and stray into a corrupt disease: for as God doth thus occasion, and positively concurre to evill, that when a man is purposed to do a great sin, God infuses some good thoughts which make him choose a lesse sin, or leave out some circumstance which aggravated that; so the devill doth not only suffer but provoke us to some things naturally good, upon condition that we shall omit some other more necessary and more obligatory. And this is his greatest subtilty; because herein we have the deceitfull comfort of having done well, and can very hardly spie our errour because it is but an insensible omission, and no accusing act. With the first of these I have often suspected my self to be overtaken; which is, with a desire of the next life: which though I know it is not merely out of a wearinesse of this, because I had the same desires when I went with the tyde, and enjoyed fairer hopes then now: yet I doubt worldly encombrances have encreased it. I would not that death should take me asleep. I would not have him meerly seise me,

and onely declare me to be dead, but win me, and overcome me. When I must shipwrack, I would do it in a Sea, where mine impotencie might have some excuse; not in a sullen weedy lake, where I could not have so much as exercise for my swimming. Therefore I would fain do something; but that I cannot tell what, is no wonder. For to chuse, is to do: but to be no part of any body, is to be nothing. At most, the greatest persons, are but great wens, and excrescences; men of wit and delightfull conversation, but as moalls for ornament, except they be so incorporated into the body of the world, that they contribute something to the sustentation of the whole. This I made account that I begun early, when I understood the study of our laws: but was diverted by the worst voluptuousnes, which is an Hydroptique immoderate desire of humane learning and languages: beautifull ornaments to great fortunes; but mine needed an occupation, and a course which I thought I entred well into, when I submitted my self to such a service, as I thought might imploy[ed] those poor advantages, which I had. And there I stumbled too, yet I would try again: for to this hour I am nothing, or so little, that I am scarce subject and argument good enough for one of mine own letters: yet I fear, that doth not ever proceed from a good root, that I am so well content to be lesse, that is dead. You, Sir, are farre enough from these descents, your vertue keeps you secure, and your naturall disposition to mirth will preserve you; but lose none of these holds, a slip is often as dangerous as a bruise, and though you cannot fall to my lownesse, yet in a much lesse distraction you may meet my sadnesse, for he is no safer which falls from an high tower into the leads, then he which falls from thence to the ground: make therefore to your self some mark, and go towards it alegrement. Though I be in such a planetary and erratique fortune, that I can do nothing constantly, yet you may finde some constancy in my constant advising you to it.

Your hearty true friend
J. Donne.

I came this evening from M. Jones *his house in* Essex, *where M.* Martin *hath been, and left a relation of Captain* Whitcocks [Whitelock's] *death, perchance it is no news to you, but it was to me; without doubt want broke him; for when M.* Hollands *company by reason of the plague broke, the Captain sought to be at M*ris Jones *house, who on her husbands absence declining it, he went in the night, his boy carrying his cloakbag, on foot to the Lord of* Sussex, *who going next day to hunt, the Captain not then sick,*

told him he would see him no more. A Chaplain came up to him, to whom he delivered an account of his understanding, and I hope, of his beliefe, and soon after dyed; and my Lord hath buryed him with his own Ancestors. Perchance his life needed a longer sicknesse, but a man may go faster and safer, when he enjoys that day light of a clear and sound understanding, then in the night or twilight of an ague or other disease. And the grace of Almighty God doth every thing suddenly and hastily, but depart from us, it enlightens us, warms us, heats us, ravishes us, at once. Such a medicin, I fear, his inconsideration needed; and I hope as confidently that he had it. As our soul is infused when it is created, and created when it is infused, so at her going out Gods mercy is had by asking, and that is asked by having. Lest your Polesworth *carrier should cousen me, I send my man with this letter early to* London, *whither this Tuesday all the Court come to a Christening at* Arondell *house, and stay in town so that I will sup with the good Lady, and write again to-morrow to you, if any thing be occasioned there, which concerns you, and I will tell her so; next day they are to return to* Hampton, *and upon friday the King to* Royston.

XIX. To Sir H. Goodere.

SIR,

If this which I send you inclosed give me right intelligence, I present you a way by which you may redeem all your former wastes, and recompense your ill fortunes, in having sometimes apprehended unsuccessfull suits, and (that which I presume you affect most) ease your self from all future inquisition of widowes or such businesses as aske so over industrious a pursuit, as devest a man from his best happinesse of enjoying himself. I give you (I think) the first knowledge, of two millions confiscated to the Crown of England: of which I dare assure myself the coffers have yet touched none; nor have the Commissioners for suits any thing to oppose against a suit founded upon this confiscation, though they hold never so strictly to their instructions. After you have served your self with a proportion, I pray make a petition in my name for as much as you think may be given me for my book out of this; for, but out of this, I have no imagination. And for a token of my desire to serve him, present M. *Fowler* with 3 or 4000 *li.* of this since he was so resolved never to leave his place, without a suit of that value. I wish your cousen in the town, better provided; but if he be not, here is enough for him. And since I am ever an affectionate servant to that journey, acquaint M. *Martin* from me, how easie it will be to get a good part of this for *Virginia*. Upon the least petition that M. *Brook* can present he may make himself whole again, of all which the Kings servants M. *Lepton* and master *Waterouse*, have endammaged him. Give him leave to offer to M. *Hakevill* enough to please himself, for his *Aurum Reginæ*. And if M. *Gherard* have no present hopefull designe upon a worthy Widow, let him have so much of this as will provide him that house and coach which he promised to lend me at my return. If M. *Inago Jones* be not satisfied for his last Maske (because I hear say it cannot come to much) here is enough to be had: This is but a copy, but if Sir *Ro. Cotton* have the originall he will not deny it you; if he hath it not, no body else hath it, nor can prevent you; husband it well, which you may easily doe, because I assure my self none of the children nor friends of the party condemned will crosse you or importune the King for any part. If I get no more by it, yet it hath made me a Letter. And Sir (to depart from this Mine) in what part of my Letters soever you find the remembrance of my humble service to my

Lord of *Bedford*, I beseech you ever think them intended for the first, and in that ranke present them. I have yet received but one Letter from you which was of the 10 of *December* by M. *Pory*, but you see that as long as there is one egge left in the nest, I never leave laying, nor should although you had sent none since; all at last will not amount to so good a testimony as I would fain give how much I am

Your affectionate servant and lover,
J. Donne.

Sir, I write this Letter in no very great degree of a convalescence from such storms of a stomach colick as kept me in a continuall vomiting, so that I know not what I should have been able to doe to dispatch this winde, but that an honest fever came and was my physick: I tell you of it onely lest some report should make it worse, for me thinks that they who love to adde to news should think it a master-piece to be able to say no worse of any ill fortune of mine then it deserves, since commonly it deserves worse then they can say, but they did not, and I am reprieved. I finde dying to be like those facts which denying makes felony: when a sicknesse examines us, and we confess that we are willing to die, we cannot, but those who are — — incurre the penalty: and I may die yet, if talking idly be an ill sign. God be with you.

XX. To the same.

SIR,
It is in our State ever held for a good sign to change Prison, and *nella Signoria de mi*, I will think it so, that my sicknesse hath given me leave to come to my *London*-prison. I made no doubt but my entrance-pain (for it was so rather then a sicknesse, but that my sadnesse putrefied and corrupted it to that name) affected you also; for nearer Contracts then generall Christianity, had made us so much towards one [another], that one part cannot escape the distemper of the other. I was therefore very carefull, as well to slack any sorrow which my danger might occasion in you; as to give you the comfort of having been heard in your prayers for me, to tell you as soon as my pain remitted what steps I made towards health, which I did last week. This *Tuesday* morning your man brought me a Letter, which (if he had not found me at *London*) I see he had a hasty commandment to have brought to *Micham*. S^{r}, though my fortune hath made me such as I am, rather a sicknesse and disease of the world then any part of it, yet I esteemed my self so far from being so to you, as I esteemed you to be far from being so of the world, as to measure men by fortune or events. I am now gone so far towards health, as there is not infirmity enough left in me for an assurance of so much noblenesse and truth, as your last Letter is to work upon, that might cure a greater indisposition then I am now in: And though if I had died, I had not gone without testimonies of such a disposition in you towards the reparation of my fortune, or preservation of my poor reputation; yet I would live, and be some such thing as you might not be ashamed to love. Your man must send away this hour in which he visits me; and I have not yet (for I came last night) offered to visit my La. *Bedford*, and therefore have nothing to say which should make me grudge this straitnesse of time. He tels me he sends again upon *Thursday*, and therefore I will make an end of this Letter, and perfect it then. I doubt my Letters have not come duly to your hand, and that I writing in my dungeon of *Michim* without dating have made the Chronologie and sequence of my Letters perplexed to you; howsoever you shall not be rid of this Ague of my Letters, though perchance the fit change daies. I have received in a narrow compasse three of yours, one with the Catalogue of your Books, another I found here left last *Saterday* by your man, and this which he brought me

this morning. Sir, I dare sit no longer in my wastcoat, nor have any thing worth the danger of a relapse to write. I owe you so much of my health, as I would not mingle you in any occasion of repairing it, and therefore here ask leave to kisse your hands, and bid you good morrow and farewell.

Your very true friend and servant

J. Donne.

XXI. To S^r^ H. G.

Sir,

It should be no interruption to your pleasures, to hear me often say that I love you, and that you are as much my meditation as my self: I often compare not you and me, but the sphear in which your resolutions are, and my wheel; both I hope concentrique to God: for methinks the new Astronomie is thus appliable well, that we which are a little earth, should rather move towards God, then that he which is fulfilling, and can come no whither, should move towards us. To your life full of variety, nothing is old, nor new to mine; and as to that life, all stickings and hesitations seem stupid and stony, so to this, all fluid slipperinesses, and transitory migrations seem giddie and featherie. In that life one is ever in the porch or postern, going in or out, never within his house himself: It is a garment made of remnants, a life raveld out into ends, a line discontinued, and a number of small wretched points, uselesse, because they concurre not: A life built of past and future, not proposing any constant present; they have more pleasures then we, but not more pleasure; they joy oftner, we longer; and no man but of so much understanding as may deliver him from being a fool, would change with a mad-man, which had a better proportion of wit in his often *Lucidis*. You know, they which dwell farthest from the Sun, if in any convenient distance, have longer daies, better appetites, better digestion, better growth, and longer life: And all these advantages have their mindes who are well removed from the scorchings, and dazlings, and exhalings of the worlds glory: but neither of our lives are in such extremes; for you living at Court without ambition, which would burn you, or envy, which would devest others, live in the Sun, not in the fire: And I which live in the Country without stupefying, am not in darknesse, but in shadow which is not no light, but a pallid, waterish, and diluted one. As all shadows are of one colour, if you respect the body from which they are cast (for our shadows upon clay will be dirty, and in a garden green, and flowery) so all retirings into a shadowy life are alike from all causes, and alike subject to the barbarousnesse and insipid dulnesse of the Country; onely the emploiment, and that upon which you cast and bestow your pleasure, businesse, or books, gives it the tincture, and beauty. But truly wheresoever we are, if we can but tell our selves truly what and where we would be, we

may make any state and place such; for we are so composed, that if abundance, or glory scorch and melt us, we have an earthly cave, our bodies, to go into by consideration, and cool our selves: and if we be frozen, and contracted with lower and dark fortunes, we have within us a torch, a soul, lighter and warmer then any without: we are therefore our own umbrella's, and our own suns. These, Sir, are the sallads and onions of *Micham*, sent to you with as wholesome affection as your other friends send Melons and Quelque-choses from Court and *London*. If I present you not as good diet as they, I would yet say grace to theirs, and bid much good do it you. I send you, with this, a Letter which I sent to the Countesse. It is not my use nor duty to doe so, but for your having of it, there were but two consents, and I am sure you have mine, and you are sure you have hers. I also writ to her La^{p} for the verses she shewed in the garden, which I did not onely to extort them, nor onely to keep my promise of writing, for that I had done in the other Letter, and perchance she hath forgotten the promise; nor onely because I think my Letters just good enough for a progresse, but because I would write apace to her, whilest it is possible to expresse that which I yet know of her, for by this growth I see how soon she will be ineffable.

XXII. SIR,

Though my friendship be good for nothing else, it may give you the profit of a tentation, or of an affliction: It may excuse your patience; and though it cannot allure, it shall importune you. Though I know you have many worthy friends of all rankes, yet I adde something, since I which am of none, would fain be your friend too. There is some of the honour and some of the degrees of a Creation, to make a friendship of nothing. Yet, not to annihilate my self utterly (for though it seem humblenesse, yet it is a work of as much almightinesse, to bring a thing to nothing, as from nothing) though I be not of the best stuffe for friendship, which men of warm and durable fortunes only are, I cannot say, that I am not of the best fashion, if truth and honesty be that; which I must ever exercise, towards you, because I learned it of you: for the conversation with worthy men, and of good example, though it sow not vertue in us, yet produceth and ripeneth it. Your mans haste, and mine to *Micham* cuts off this Letter here, yet, as in littell paterns torn from a whole piece, this may tell you what all I am. Though by taking me before my day (which I accounted Tuesday) I make short payment of this duty of Letters, yet I have a little comfort in this, that you see me hereby, willing to pay those debts which I can, before my time.

Your affectionate friend
J. Donne.

First Saturday in
March. 1607.

You forget to send me the Apology; and many times, I think it an injury to remember one of a promise, lest it confesse a distrust. But of the book, by occasion of reading the Deans answer to it, I have sometimes some want.

XXIII. To the Countesse of Bedford.

Happiest and worthiest Lady,

I Do not remember that ever I have seen a petition in verse, I would not therefore be singular, nor adde these to your other papers. I have yet adventured so near as to make a petition for verse, it is for those your Ladiship did me the honour to see in *Twicknam* garden, except you repent your making; and having mended your judgement by thinking worse, that is, better, because juster, of their subject. They must needs be an excellent exercise of your wit, which speaks so well of so ill: I humbly beg them of your Ladiship, with two such promises, as to any other of your compositions were threatenings: that I will not shew them, and that I will not beleeve them; and nothing should be so used that comes from your brain or heart. If I should confesse a fault in the boldnesse of asking them, or make a faulte by doing it in a longer Letter, your Ladiship might use your style and old fashion of the Court towards me, and pay me with a Pardon. Here therefore I humbly kisse your Ladiships fair learned hands, and wish you good wishes and speedy grants.

Your Ladiships servant

J. Donne.

XXIV. To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.

Because things be conserved by the same means, which established them, I nurse that friendship by Letters, which you begot so: though you have since strengthened it by more solid aliment and real offices. In these Letters from the Country there is this merit, that I do otherwise unwillingly turn mine eye or thoughts from my books, companions in whom there is no falshood nor forwardnesse: which words, I am glad to observe that the holy Authours often joyne as expressers and relatives to one another, because else out of a naturall descent to that unworthy fault of frowardnesse, furthered with that incommodity of a little thinne house; I should have mistaken it to be a small thing, which now I see equalled with the worst. If you have laid my papers and books by, I pray let this messenger have them, I have determined upon them. If you have not, be content to do it, in the next three or four days. So, Sir, I kisse your hands; and deliver to you an intire and clear heart; which shall ever when I am with you be in my face and tongue, and when I am from you, in my Letters, for I will never draw Curtain between you and it.

Yours very affectionately
J. Donne.

From your house at
Micham *friday morning.*

When you are sometimes at M. Sackvills, *I pray aske if he have this book,* Baldvinus de officio pii hominis in controversiis; *it was written at the conference at* Poissy, *where* Beza *was, and he answered it; I long for it.*

XXV. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Hope you are now well come to *London*, and well, and well comforted in your Fathers health and love, and well contented that we ask you how you doe, and tell you how we are, which yet I cannot of my self; If I knew that I were ill, I were well; for we consist of three parts, a Soul, and Body, and Minde: which I call those thoughts and affections and passions, which neither soul nor body hath alone, but have been begotten by their communication, as Musique results out of our breath and a Cornet. And of all these the diseases are cures, if they be known. Of our souls sicknesses, which are sinnes, the knowledge is, to acknowledge, and that is her Physique, in which we are not dieted by drams and scruples, for we cannot take too much. Of our bodies infirmities, though our knowledge be partly *ab extrinseco*, from the opinion of the Physitian, and that the subject and matter be flexible, and various; yet their rules are certain, and if the matter be rightly applyed to the rule, our knowledge thereof is also certain. But of the diseases of the minde, there is no *Criterium*, no Canon, no rule; for, our own taste and apprehension and interpretation should be the Judge, and that is the disease it self. Therefore sometimes when I finde my self transported with jollity, and love of company, I hang Leads at my heels; and reduce to my thoughts my fortunes, my years, the duties of a man, of a friend, of a husband, of a Father, and all the incumbencies of a family: when sadnesse dejects me, either I countermine it with another sadnesse, or I kindle squibs about me again, and flie into sportfulnesse and company: and I finde ever after all, that I am like an exorcist, which had long laboured about one, which at last appears to have the Mother, that I still mistake my disease. And I still vex my self with this, because if I know it not, no body can know it. And I comfort my self, because I see dispassioned men are subject to the like ignorances. For divers mindes out of the same thing often draw contrary conclusions, as *Augustine* thought devout *Anthony* to be therefore full of the holy Ghost, because not being able to read, he could say the whole Bible, and interpret it; and *Thyreus* the Jesuit for the same reason doth thinke all the Anabaptists to be possessed. And as often out of contrary things men draw one conclusion: as to the *Roman* Church, magnificence and splendor hath ever been an argument of Gods favour, and poverty &

affliction, to the *Greek*. Out of this variety of mindes it proceeds, that though all our souls would goe to one end, Heaven, and all our bodies must go to one end, the earth: yet our third part the minde, which is our naturall guide here, chooses to every man a severall way: scarce any man likes what another doth, nor advisedly, that which himself. But Sir, I am beyond my purpose; I meant to write a Letter, and I am fallen into a discourse, and I do not only take you from some businesse, but I make you a new businesse by drawing you into these meditations. In which yet let my opennesse be an argument of such love as I would fain expresse in some worthier fashion.

XXVI. To Sir G. F.

SIR,

I Writ to you once this week before; yet I write again, both because it seems a kinde of resisting of grace, to omit any commodity of sending into *England*, and because any Pacquet from me into *England* should go, not only without just fraight, but without ballast, if it had not a letter to you. In Letters that I received from Sir H. *Wotton* yesterday from *Amyens*, I had one of the 8 of *March* from you, and with it one from M^rs^ *Danterey*, of the 28 of *January*: which is a strange disproportion. But, Sir, if our Letters come not in due order, and so make not a certain and concurrent chain, yet if they come as Atomes, and so meet at last, by any crooked, and casuall application, they make up, and they nourish bodies of friendship; and in that fashion, I mean one way or other, first or last, I hope all the Letters which have been addressed to us by one another, are safely arrived, except perchance that pacquet by the Cook be not, of which before this time you are cleare; for I received (as I told you) a Letter by M. *Nat. Rich*, and if you sent none by him, then it was that Letter, which the Cook tells you he delivered to M. *Rich*; which, with all my criticismes, I cannot reconcile; because in your last Letter, I find mention of things formerly written, which I have not found. However, I am yet in the same perplexity, which I mentioned before; which is, that I have received no syllable, neither from her self, nor by any other, how my wife hath passed her danger, nor do I know whether I be increased by a childe, or diminished by the losse of a wife. I hear from *England* of many censures of my book, of M^ris^ *Drury*; if any of those censures do but pardon me my descent in Printing any thing in verse, (which if they do, they are more charitable then my self; for I do not pardon my self, but confesse that I did it against my conscience, that is, against my own opinion, that I should not have done so) I doubt not but they will soon give over that other part of that indictment, which is that I have said so much; for no body can imagine, that I who never saw her, could have any other purpose in that, then that when I had received so very good testimony of her worthinesse, and was gone down to print verses, it became me to say, not what I was sure was just truth, but the best that I could conceive; for that had been a new weaknesse in me, to have praised any body in printed verses, that had not been capable of the best praise that

I could give. Presently after Easter we shall (I think) go to *Frankford* to be there at the election, where we shall meet Sir *H. Wotton* and Sir *Ro. Rich*, and after that we are determined to passe some time, in the Palatinate. I go thither with a great deale of devotion for me thinkes it is a new kinde of piety, that as Pilgrims went heretofore to places which had been holy and happy, so I go to a place now, which shall be so, and more, by the presence of the worthiest Princess of the world, if that marriage proceed. I have no greater errand to the place then that at my return into *England*, I may be fitter to stand in her presence, and that after I have seen a rich and abundant Countrey, in his best seasons, I may see that Sun which shall always keep it in that height. Howsoever we stray, if you have leasure to write at any time, adventure by no other way, then M. *Bruer* [*Brewer*], at the Queens Armes, a Mercer, in *Cheapside*. I shall omit no opportunity, of which I doubt not to finde more then one before we go from *Paris*. Therefore give me leave to end this, in which if you did not finde the remembrance of my humblest services to my Lady *Bedford*, your love and faith ought to try all the experiments of pouders, and dryings, and waterings to discover some lines which appeared not; because it is impossible that a Letter should come from me, with such an ungrateful silence.

Your very true poor friend and
servant and lover
J. Donne.

This day begins a history, of which I doubt not but I shall write more to you before I leave this town. Monsieur de Rohan, *a person for birth, next heire to the Kingdome of* Navar, *after the Kings children, (if the King of* Spaine *were weary of it) and for allyance, sonne in law to D.* Sully, *and for breeding in the wars and estate, the most renarkable man of the Religion, being Governour of S.* Jean d'Angeli, *one of the most important towns which they of the Religion hold for their security, finding that some distasts between the Lieutenant and the Maior of the town, and him, were dangerously fomented by great persons, stole from Court, rode post to the town and removed these two persons. He sent his secretary, and another dependent of his to give the Queen satisfaction, who is so far from receiving it, that his messengers are committed to the* Bastile *likely to be presently tortured; all his friends here commanded to their houses, and the Queens companies of light horse sent already thitherward, and foot companies*

preparing, which troops being sent against a place, so much concerning those of the Religion to keep, and where they abound in number and strength, cannot chuse but produce effects worthy your hearing in the next Letter.

XXVII. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

Because I am in a place and season where I see every thing bud forth, I must do so too, and vent some of my meditations to you; the rather because all other buds being yet without taste or virtue, my Letters may be like them. The pleasantnesse of the season displeases me. Every thing refreshes, and I wither, and I grow older and not better, my strength diminishes, and my load growes, and being to passe more and more stormes, I finde that I have not only cast out all my ballast which nature and time gives, Reason and discretion, and so am as empty and light as Vanity can make me; but I have over fraught my self with Vice, and so am riddingly subject to two contrary wrackes, Sinking and Oversetting, and under the iniquity of such a disease as inforces the patient when he is almost starved, not only to fast, but to purge. For I have much to take in, and much to cast out; sometimes I thinke it easier to discharge my self of vice then of vanity, as one may sooner carry the fire out of a room then the smoake: and then I see it was a new vanity to think so. And when I think sometimes that vanity, because it is thinne and airie, may be expelled with vertue or businesse, or substantiall vice; I finde that I give entrance thereby to new vices. Certainly as the earth and water, one sad, the other fluid, make but one bodie: so to aire and Vanity, there is but one *Centium morbi*. And that which later Physicians say of our bodies, is fitter for our mindes: for that which they call Destruction, which is a corruption and want of those fundamentall parts whereof we consist, is Vice: and that *Collectio stercorum*, which is but the excrement of that corruption, is our Vanity and indiscretion: both these have but one root in me, and must be pulled out at once, or never. But I am so farre from digging to it, that I know not where it is, for it is not in mine eyes only, but in every sense, nor in my concupiscence only, but in every power and affection. Sir, I was willing to let you see how impotent a man you love, not to dishearten you from doing so still (for my vices are not infectious nor wandring, they came not yesterday, nor mean to go away to day: they Inne not, but dwell in me, and see themselves so welcome, and find in me so good bad company of one another, that they will not change, especially to one not apprehensive, nor easily accessible) but I do it, that your counsell

might cure me, and if you deny that, your example shal, for I will as much strive to be like you as I will wish you to continue good.

XXVIII. To the Honourable Kt Sr H. Goodere one of the Gent. of his Majesties privy Chamber.

SIR,

You may remember that long since you delivered Mr *Fowler* possession of me, but the wide distance in which I have lived from Court, makes me reasonably fear, that now he knows not his right and power in me, though he must of necessity have all, to whom you and I joyn in a gift of me, as we did to him, so that perchance he hath a servant of me, which might be passed in a book of concealment. If your leisure suffer it, I pray finde whether I be in him still, and conserve me in his love; and so perfect your own work, or doe it over again, and restore me to the place, which by your favour I had in him. For Mr *Powell* who serves her Maty as Clerk of her counsell, hath told me that Mr *Fowler* hath some purpose to retire himself; and therefore I would fain for all my love, have so much of his, as to finde him willing when I shall seek him at Court, to let me understand his purpose therein; for if my means may make me acceptable to the Queen and him, I should be very sorry he should make so farre steps therein with any other, that I should fail in it, onely for not having spoke to him soon enough. It were an injury to the forwardnesse of your love to adde more; here therefore I kisse your hands, and commend to you the truth of my love.

Your very affectionate
servant and lover
Jo. Donne.

From my lodging in the Strand,
whither I shall return on Munday,
13 June 1607.

XXIX. To Sr H. G.

SIR,

You husband my time thriftily, when you command me to write by such a messenger, as can tell you more then I can write, for so he doth not onely carry the Letter, but is the Letter. But that the naming of some things, may give you occasion to ask him farther, and him to open himself unto you, give me leave to tell you, that the now Spa. Embassadour proceeds in the old pace, the King hath departed from his ordinary way so farre, as to appoint 9 of the Councell to treat with him; but when they came to any approaches, he answered, that he brought onely Commission to propose certain things, which he was ready to doe, but he had no instructions to treat, but expected them upon an other return from his Master. So that there is no treaty for the marriage begun yet: for I know you have heard *Olivarez* his free acknowledgement, that til the Prince came, there was no thoght of it. The King in his gests of this progress, hath determined it, not as heretofore, at *Windsor*, but at *Farnham* during pleasure: so he is within a journey of *Southampton*; and even that circumstance adds to some other reasons, that he expects the Prince this Summer, and that Sir *W. Crofts*, in his last dispatches, enlarged the Prince in his liberty, from his Father, to come away, if he would. Amongst all the irregularities of this age, to me this is as strange as any, That this year there is no peace, and yet no sword drawn in the world; & it is a lost conjecture to think which way any of the Armies will bend. Here it is imagined, that *Yukendorfe* and *Gabor* (for, for any concurrence of love, it is but a dream) may so farre distresse *Bohemia*, as that *Tilly* must be recalled thither; and that if he be, *Brunswikes* way is open into *Baviere*, where he may recompense great losses, whilest *Mansfield* and *Gonzales*, and his Excellency and *Spinola*, keep the ballance even in their parts, by looking upon another. This noble friend of yours is in his last minute, in this Town; and I am going into the Coach with my Lo. to *Hanworth*. If I might have forborn the sealing the rest till my return from thence, you might have heard something more from

Your very true poor friend and humble
servant in Chr. Jes. J. Donne.

No straitnesse makes me forget my service to your daughters: If my Bell were tolling, I should pray for them, and though my Letter be sealing, I

leave not out my wishes, that their fortunes may second their goodnesse. Amen.

XXX. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

This *Tuesday* morning, which hath brought me to *London*, presents me with all your Letters. Me thought it was a rent day, I mean such as yours, and not as mine; and yet such too, when I considered how much I ought you for them, how good a mother, how fertill and abundant the understanding is, if she have a good father; and how well friendship performs that office. For that which is denied in other generations is done in this of yours: for here is superfetation, childe upon childe, and that which is more strange twins at a latter conception. If in my second religion, friendship, I had a conscience, either *errantem* to mistake good and bad and indifferent, or *opinantem* to be ravished by others opinions or examples, or *dubiam* to adhere to neither part, or *scrupulosam* to incline to one, but upon reasons light in themselves, or indiscussed in me, (which are almost all the diseases of conscience) I might mistake your often, long, and busie Letters, and fear you did but intreat me to have mercy upon you and spare you; for you know our Court took the resolution, that it was the best way to dispatch the French Prince back again quickly, to receive him solemnly, ceremoniously, and expensively, when he hoped a domestique and durable entertainment. I never meant to excell you in weight nor price, but in number and bulk I thought I might, because he may cast up a greater summe who hath but forty small monies, then he with twenty Portuguesses. The memory of friends, (I mean onely for Letters) neither enters ordinarily into busied men, because they are never emploied within, nor into men of pleasure, because they are never at home. For these wishes therefore which you won out of your pleasure and recreation, you were as excusable to me if you writ seldome, as Sir *H. Wotton* is, under the oppression of businesse, or the necessity of seeming so; or more then he, because I hope you have both pleasure and businesse: onely to me, who have neither, this omission were sinne; for though writing be not of the precepts of friendship, but of the counsels, yet, as in some cases to some men counsels become precepts, and though not immediately from God, yet very roundly and quickly from his Church, (as selling and dividing goods in the first time, continence in the Romane Church, and order and decencie in ours) so to me who can do nothing else, it seems to binde my conscience to write; and it is sinne to doe

against the conscience, though that erre. Yet no mans Letters might be better wanted then mine, since my whole Letter is nothing else but a confession that I should and would write. I owed you a Letter in verse before by mine own promise, and now that you think that you have hedged in that debt by a greater by your Letter in verse, I think it now most seasonable and fashionable for me to break. At least, to write presently, were to accuse my self of not having read yours so often as such a Letter deserves from you to me. To make my debt greater (for such is the desire of all, who cannot or mean not to pay) I pray read these two problemes: for such light flashes as these have been my hawkings in my sorry [Surrey?] journies. I accompany them with another ragge of verses, worthy of that name for the smalnesse, and age, for it hath long lien among my other papers, and laughs at them that have adventured to you: for I think till now you saw it not, and neither you, nor it should repent it. Sir, if I were any thing, my love to you might multiply it, and dignifie it: But infinite nothings are but one such; yet since even Chymera's have some name and titles, I am also

Yours.

XXXI. To your selfe.

SIR,

If this Letter finde you in a progresse, or at *Bath*, or at any place of equall leasure to our *Spâ*, you will perchance descend to reade so low meditations as these. Nothing in my L. of *Salisburies* death exercised my poor considerations so much, as the multitude of libells. It was easily discerned, some years before his death, that he was at a defensive war, both for his honour and health, and (as we then thought) for his estate: and I thought, that had removed much of the envy. Besides, I have just reasons to think, that in the chiefest businesses between the Nations, he was a very good patriot. But I meant to speake of nothing but the libells, of which, all which are brought into these parts, are so tastelesse and flat, that I protest to you, I think they were made by his friends. It is not the first time that our age hath seen that art practised, That when there are witty and sharp libels made which not onely for the liberty of speaking, but for the elegancie, and composition, would take deep root, and make durable impressions in the memory, no other way hath been thought so fit to suppresse them, as to divulge some course [coarse], and railing one: for when the noise is risen, that libels are abroad, mens curiositie must be served with something: and it is better for the honour of the person traduced, that some blunt downright railings be vented, of which everybody is soon weary, then other pieces, which entertain us long with a delight, and love to the things themselves. I doubt not but he smoothered some libels against him in his life time. But I would all these (or better) had been made then, for they might have testified that the Authors had meant to mend him, but now they can have no honest pretence. I dare say to you, where I am not easily misinterpreted, that there may be cases, where one may do his Countrey good service, by libelling against a live man. For, where a man is either too great, or his Vices too generall, to be brought under a judiciary accusation, there is no way, but this extraordinary accusing, which we call Libelling. And I have heard that nothing hath soupled and allayed the D. of *Lerma* in his violent greatnesse, so much as the often libels made upon him. But after death, it is, in all cases, unexcusable. I know that *Lucifer*, and one or two more of the Fathers who writ libellous books against the Emperours of their times, are excused by our writers, because they writ not in the lives of those Emperours. I am

glad for them that they writ not in their lives, for that must have occasioned tumult, and contempt, against so high and Soveraign persons. But that doth not enough excuse them to me, for writing so after their death; for that was ignoble, and uselesse, though they did a little escape the nature of libels, by being subscribed and avowed: which excuse would not have served in the Star-chamber, where sealed Letters have been judged Libels; but these of which we speake at this present, are capable of no excuse, no amolishment, and therefore I cry you mercy, and my self too, for disliking them, with so much diligence, for they deserve not that. But Sir, you see by this, and by my Letter of last week, from hence the peremptory barrennesse of this place, from whence we can write nothing into *England*, but of that which comes from thence. Till the Lady *Worster* came hither, I had never heard any thing to make me imagine that Sir *Rob. Rich* was in *England*; the first hour that I had knowledge of it, I kisse his hands by this Letter. I make account to be in *London*, transitorily, about the end of *August*. You shall do me much favour, if I may finde a Letter from you (if you shall not then be there) at the Lady *Bartlets*: I shall come home in much ignorance, nor would I discern home by a better light, or any other then you. I can glory of nothing in this voyage, but that I have afflicted my Lady *Bedford* with few Letters. I protest earnestly to you, it troubles me much more to dispatch a pacquet into *England*, without a Letter to her, then it would to put in three. But I have been heretofore too immodest towards her, and I suffer this Purgatory for it. We make accounts to leave this place within 8 or 10 days, and hence to make our best haste to the Count *Maurice*, where we think to finde again the young Palatine: all this I tell you only because when you know, that we shall run too fast to write any more Letters, you may easily pardon the importunities and impertinencies of this, and cast into no lower place of your love

Your very true friend and servant

J. Donne.

Spâ, 26 July *here*

1612.

XXXII. To my Lord G. H.

SIR,

I Am near the execution of that purpose for *France*; though I may have other ends, yet if it do but keep me awake, it recompenses me well. I am now in the afternoon of my life, and then it is unwholesome to sleep. It is ill to look back, or give over in a course; but worse never to set out. I speake to you at this time of departing, as I should do at my last upon my death-bed; and I desire to deliver into your hands a heart and affections, as innocent towards you, as I shall to deliver my soul into Gods hands then. I say not this out of diffidence, as though you doubted it, or that this should look like such an excuse, as implyed an accusation; but because my fortune hath burdened you so, as I could not rectifie it before my going, my conscience and interpretation (severer I hope then yours towards my self) calls that a kinde of demerit, but God who hath not only afforded us a way to be delivered from our great many debts, contracted by our Executorship to *Adam*, but also another for our particular debts after, hath not left poor men unprovided, for discharge of morall and civill debts; in which, acknowledgement, and thankfulnesse is the same, as repentance and contrition is in spiritual debts: and though the value and dignity of all these be not perchance in the things, but in the acceptation, yet I cannot doubt of it, either in God, or you. But Sir, because there is some degree of thankfulnesse in asking more (for that confesses all former obligations, and a desire to be still in the same dependency) I must intreat you to continue that wherein you have most expressed your love to me, which is, to maintain me in the same room in my Lady *Bedfords* opinion, in the which you placed me. I professe to you that I am too much bound to her, for expressing every way her care of my fortune, that I am weary before she is; and out of a loathnesse, that so good works should be bestowed upon so ill stuffe, or that so much ill fortune should be mingled with hers, as that she should misse any thing that she desired, though it were but for me. I am willing to depart from farther exercising her indevours in that kinde. I shall be bold to deliver my poor Letters to her Ladiships hands, through yours, whilest I am abroad though I shall ever account my self at home, whilest I am in your memory.

Your affectionate servant and lover
J. Donne.

XXXIII. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

Nature hath made all bodies alike, by mingling and kneading up the same elements in every one. And amongst men, the other nature, Custome, hath made every minde like some other; we are patterns, or copies, we informe, or imitate. But as he hath not presently attained to write a good hand, which hath equalled one excellent Master in his *A*, another in his *B*, much lesse he which hath sought all the excellent Masters, and imployed all his time to exceed on one Letter, because not so much an excellency of any, nor every one, as an evennesse and proportion, and respect to one another gives the perfection: so is no man vertuous by particular example. Not he that doth all actions to the pattern of the most valiant, or liberall, which Histories afford: nor he which chuses from every one their best actions, and thereupon doth something like those. Perchance such may be *in via perficiendorum*, which Divines allow to Monasticall life, but not *perfectorum*, which by them is only due to Prelacy. For vertue is even, and continuall, and the same, and can therefore break no where, nor admit ends, nor beginnings: it is not only not broken, but not tyed together. He is not vertuous, out of whose actions you can pick an excellent one. Vice and her fruits may be seen, because they are thick bodies, but not vertue, which is all light, and vices have swellings and fits, and noise, because being extreams, they dwell far asunder, and they maintain both a forein war against vertue, and a civill against one another, and affect Soveraignty, as vertue doth society. The later Physitians say, that when our naturall inborn preservative is corrupted or wasted, and must be restored by a like extracted from other bodies; the chief care is that the Mummy have in it no excelling quality, but an equally digested temper: And such is true vertue. But men who have preferred money before all, think they deal honourably with vertue, if they compare her with money: And think that as money is not called base, till the allay exceed the pure; so they are vertuous enough, if they have enough to make their actions currant, which is, if either they get praise, or (in a lower abasing) if they incurre not infamy or penalty. But you know who said, *Angusta innocentia est ad legem bonum esse*: which rule being given for positive Laws, severe mistakers apply even to Gods Law, and (perchance against his Commandment) binde themselves to his

Counsails, beyond his Laws. But they are worse, that thinke that because some men formerly wastfull, live better with half their rents then they did with all, being now advantaged with discretion and experience, therefore our times need lesse moral vertue then the first, because we have Christianity, which is the use and application of all vertue: as though our religion were but an art of thrift, to make a little vertue go far. For as plentifull springs are fittest, and best become large Aqueducts, so doth much vertue such a steward and officer as a Christian. But I must not give you a Homily for a Letter. I said a great while since, that custome made men like; we who have been accustomed to one another are like in this, that we love not business: this therefore shall not be to you nor me a busie Letter. I end with a probleme, whose errand is, to aske for his fellowes. I pray before you ingulfe your self in the progresse, leave them for me, and such other of my papers as you will lend me till you return. And besides this Allegoricall lending, send me truely your counsails, and love God and me, whilest I love him and you.

XXXIV. To my very true and very good friend Sir Henry Goodere.

SIR,

At some later reading, I was more affected with that part of your Letter, which is of the book, and the namelesse Letters, then at first. I am not sorry, for that affection were for a jealousie or suspicion of a flexibility in you. But I am angry, that any should think, you had in your Religion peccant humours, defective, or abundant, or that such a booke, (if I mistake it not) should be able to work upon you; my comfort is, that their judgment is too weak to endanger you, since by this it confesses, that it mistakes you, in thinking you irresolved or various: yet let me be bold to fear, that that sound true opinion, that in all Christian professions there is way to salvation (which I think you think) may have been so incommodiously or intempestively sometimes uttered by you; or else your having friends equally near you of all the impressions of Religion, may have testified such an indifferency, as hath occasioned some to further such inclinations, as they have mistaken to be in you. This I have feared, because hertofore the inobedient Puritans, and now the over obedient Papists attempt you. It hath hurt very many, not in their conscience, nor ends, but in their reputation, and ways, that others have thought them fit to be wrought upon. As some bodies are as wholesomly nourished as ours, with Akornes, and endure nakednesse, both which would be dangerous to us, if we for them should leave our former habits, though theirs were the Primitive diet and custome: so are many souls well fed with such formes, and dressings of Religion, as would distemper and misbecome us, and make us corrupt towards God, if any humane circumstance moved it, and in the opinion of men, though none. You shall seldome see a Coyne, upon which the stamp were removed, though to imprint it better, but it looks awry and squint. And so, for the most part, do mindes which have received divers impressions. I will not, nor need to you, compare the Religious. The channels of Gods mercies run through both fields; and they are sister teats of his graces, yet both diseased and infected, but not both alike. And I think, that as *Copernicisme* in the Mathematiques hath carried earth farther up, from the stupid Center; and yet not honoured it, nor advantaged it, because for the necessity of appearances, it hath carried heaven so much higher from it: so the *Roman* profession

seems to exhale, and refine our wills from earthly Drugs, and Lees, more then the Reformed, and so seems to bring us nearer heaven; but then that carries heaven farther from us, by making us pass so many Courts, and Offices of Saints in this life, in all our petitions, and lying in a painfull prison in the next, during the pleasure, not of him to whom we go, and who must be our Judge, but of them from whom we come, who know not our case. Sir, as I said last time, labour to keep your alacrity and dignity in an even temper: for in a dark sadnesse, indifferent things seem abominable, or necessary, being neither; as trees, and sheep to melancholique night-walkers have unproper shapes. And when you descend to satisfie all men in your own religion, or to excuse others to al[l], you prostitute your self and your understanding, though not a prey, yet a mark, and a hope, and a subject, for every sophister in Religion to work on. For the other part of your Letter, spent in the praise of the Countesse, I am always very apt to beleeve it of her, and can never beleeve it so well, and so reasonably, as now, when it is averred by you; but for the expressing it to her, in that sort as you seem to counsaile, I have these two reasons to decline it. That that knowledge which she hath of me, was in the beginning of a graver course, then of a Poet, into which (that I may also keep my dignity) I would not seem to relapse. The Spanish proverb informes me, that he is a fool which cannot make one Sonnet, and he is mad which makes two. The other stronger reason, is my integrity to the other Countesse, of whose worthinesse though I swallowed your opinion at first upon your words, yet I have had since an explicit faith, and now a knowledge: and for her delight (since she descends to them) I had reserved not only all the verses, which I should make, but all the thoughts of womens worthinesse. But because I hope she will not disdain, that I should write well of her Picture, I have obeyed you thus far, as to write: but intreat you by your freindship, that by this occasion of versifying, I be not traduced, nor esteemed light in that Tribe, and that house where I have lived. If those reasons which moved you to bid me write be not constant in you still, or if you meant not that I should write verses; or if these verses be too bad, or too good, over or under her understanding, and not fit; I pray receive them, as a companion and supplement of this Letter to you: and as such a token as I use to send, which use, because I wish rather they should serve (except you wish otherwise) I send no other; but after I have told you, that here at a Christning at *Peckam*, you are remembered by divers of ours and I commanded to tell you so, I kisse your hands, and so

seal to you my pure love, which I would not refuse to do by any labour or danger.

Your very true friend and servant

J. Donne.

XXXV. To S[r] G. M.

If you were here, you would not think me importune, if I bid you good morrow every day; and such a patience will excuse my often Letters. No other kinde of conveyance is better for knowledge, or love: What treasures of Morall knowledge are in *Senecaes* Letters to onely one *Lucilius*? and what of Naturall in *Plinies*? how much of the storie of the time, is in *Ciceroes* Letters? And how all of these times, in the Jesuites Eastern and Western Epistles? where can we finde so perfect a Character of *Phalaris*, as in his own Letters, which are almost so many writs of Execution? Or of *Brutus*, as in his privie seals for monie? The Evangiles and Acts, teach us what to beleeve, but the Epistles of the Apostles what to do. And those who have endevoured to dignifie *Seneca* above his worth, have no way fitter, then to imagine Letters between him and S. *Paul*. As they think also that they have expressed an excellent person, in that Letter which they obtrude, from our B[lessed] Saviour to King *Agabarus*. The Italians, which are most discursive, and think the world owes them all wisdome, abound so much in this kinde of expressing, that *Michel Montaig*[*n*]*e* saies, he hath seen, (as I remember) 400 volumes of Italian Letters. But it is the other capacity which must make mine acceptable, that they are also the best conveyers of love. But, though all knowledge be in those Authors already, yet, as some poisons, and some medicines, hurt not, nor profit, except the creature in which they reside, contribute their lively activitie, and vigor; so much of the knowledge buried in Books perisheth, and becomes ineffectuall, if it be not applied, and refreshed by a companion, or friend. Much of their goodnesse, hath the same period, which some Physicians of *Italy* have observed to be in the biting of their *Tarentola*, that it affects no longer, then the flie lives. For with how much desire we read the papers of any living now, (especially friends) which we would scarce allow a boxe in our cabinet, or shelf in our Library, if they were dead? And we do justly in it, for the writings and words of men present, we may examine, controll, and expostulate, and receive satisfaction from the authors; but the other we must beleeve, or discredit; they present no mean. Since then at this time, I am upon the stage, you may be content to hear me. And now that perchance I have brought you to it, (as *Thom. Badger* did the King) now I have nothing to say. And it is well, for the Letter is already long enough, else let this probleme supply,

which was occasioned by you, of women wearing stones; which, it seems, you were afraid women should read, because you avert them at the beginning, with a protestation of cleanlinesse. *Martiall* found no way fitter to draw the Romane Matrons to read one of his Books, which he thinks most morall and cleanly, then to counsell them by the first Epigram to skip the Book, because it was obscene. But either you write not at all for women, or for those of sincerer palates. Though their unworthinesse, and your own ease be advocates for me with you, yet I must adde my entreaty, that you let goe no copy of my Problems, till I review them. If it be too late, at least be able to tell me who hath them.

Yours

J. Donne.

XXXVI. To Sr H. G.

I Send not my Letters as tribute, nor interest, not recompense, nor for commerce, nor as testimonials of my love, nor provokers of yours, nor to justifie my custome of writing, nor for a vent and utterance of my meditations; for my Letters are either above or under all such offices; yet I write very affectionately, and I chide and accuse my self of diminishing that affection which sends them, when I ask my self why: onely I am sure that I desire that you might have in your hands Letters of mine of all kindes, as conveyances and deliverers of me to you, whether you accept me as a friend, or as a patient, or as a penitent, or as a beadsman, for I decline no jurisdiction, or refuse any tenure. I would not open any doore upon you, but look in when you open it. Angels have not, nor affect not other knowledge of one another, then they list to reveal to one another. It is then in this onely, that friends are Angels, that they are capable and fit for such revelations when they are offered. If at any time I seem to studie you more inquisitively, it is for no other end but to know how to present you to God in my prayers, and what to ask of him for you; for even that holy exercise may not be done inopportunely, no nor importunely. I finde little errour in that Grecians counsell, who saies, If thou ask any thing of God, offer no sacrifice, nor ask elegantly, nor vehemently, but remember that thou wouldest not give to such an asker: Nor in his other Countriman, who affirms sacrifice of blood to be so unproportionable to God, that perfumes, though much more spirituall, are too grosse. Yea words which are our subtillest and delicatest outward creatures, being composed of thoughts and breath, are so muddie, so thick, that our thoughts themselves are so, because (except at the first rising) they are ever leavened with passions and affections: And that advantage of nearer familiarity with God, which the act of incarnation gave us, is grounded upon Gods assuming us, not our going to him. And, our accesses to his presence are but his descents into us; and when we get any thing by prayer, he gave us before hand the thing and the petition. For, I scarce think any ineffectuall prayer free from both sin, and the punishment of sin: yet as God seposed a seventh of our time for his exterior worship, and as his Christian Church early presented him a type of the whole year in a Lent, and after imposed the obligation of canonique hours, constituting thereby morall Sabbaths every day; I am farre from

dehorting those fixed devotions: But I had rather it were bestowed upon thanksgiving then petition, upon praise then prayer; not that God is indeared by that, or wearied by this; all is one in the receiver, but not in the sender: and thanks doth both offices; for, nothing doth so innocently provoke new graces, as gratitude. I would also rather make short prayers then extend them, though God can neither be surprised, nor besieged: for, long prayers have more of the man, as ambition of eloquence, and a complacencie in the work, and more of the Devil by often distractions: for, after in the beginning we have well intreated God to hearken, we speak no more to him. Even this Letter is some example of such infirmitie, which being intended for a Letter, is extended and strayed into a Homilie. And whatsoever is not what it was purposed, is worse; therefore it shall at last end like a Letter by assuring you I am

XXXVII. To your selfe.

SIR,

Sir *Germander Pool*, your noble friend and fellow in Armes, hath been at this house. I finde by their diligent inquiring from me, that he hath assured them that he hath much advanced your proceeding, by his resignation; but cooled them again with this, that the L. *Spencer* pretends in his room. I never feared his, nor any mans diligence in that; I feared onely your remisnesse, because you have a fortune that can endure, and a nature that can almost be content to misse. But I had rather you exercised your Philosophy and evennesse in some things else. He doth not nothing which falls cleanly and harmelesly; but he wrastles better which stands. I know you can easily forgive your self any negligences and slacknesses, but I am glad that you are ingaged to so many friends, who either by your self, or fame have knowledge of it. In all the rest of them there is a worthinesse, and in me a love which deserves to be satisfied. In this therefore, as you are forward in all things else, be content to do more for your friends then you would for your self; endevour it, that is effect it.

Your very true friend and love

J. Donne.

Tuesday.

XXXVIII. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

In the History or style of friendship, which is best written both in deeds and words, a Letter, which is of a mixed nature, and hath something of both, is a mixed Parenthesis: It may be left out, yet it contributes, though not to the being, yet to the verdure, and freshnesse thereof. Letters have truly the same office, as oaths. As these amongst light and empty men, are but fillings, and pauses, and interjections; but with weightier, they are sad attestations: So are Letters to some complement, and obligation to others. For mine, as I never authorized my servant to lie in my behalfe, (for if it were officious in him, it might be worse in me) so I allow my Letters much lesse that civill dishonest, both because they go from me more considerately, and because they are permanent; for in them I may speak to you in your chamber a year hence before I know not whom, and not hear my self. They shall therefore ever keep the sincerity and intemeratenesse of the fountain, whence they are derived. And as wheresoever these leaves fall, the root is in my heart, so shall they, as that sucks good affections towards you there, have ever true impressions thereof. This much information is in very leaves, that they can tell what the tree is, and these can tell you I am a friend, and an honest man. Of what generall use, the fruit should speake, and I have none: and of what particular profit to you, your application and experimenting should tell you, and you can make none of such a nothing; yet even of barren Sycamores, such as I, there were use, if either any light flashings, or scorching vehemencies, or sudden showres made you need so shadowy an example or remembrancer. But (Sir) your fortune and minde do you this happy injury, that they make all kinde of fruits uselesse unto you; Therefore I have placed my love wisely where I need communicate nothing. All this, though perchance you read it not till Michaelmas, was told you at *Micham, 15. August. 1607.*

XXXIX. To my most worthy friend Sir Henry Goodere.

SIR,

Because evennesse conduces as much to strength and firmnesse as greatnesse doth, I would not discontinue my course of writing. It is a sacrifice, which though friends need not, friendship doth; which hath in it so much divinity, that as we must be ever equally disposed inwardly so to doe or suffer for it, so we must sepose some certain times for the outward service thereof, though it be but formall and testimoniall: that time to me towards you is Tuesday, and my Temple, the Rose in Smith-field. If I were by your appointment your Referendarie for news, I should write but short Letters, because the times are barren. The low Countries, which used to be the Mart of news for this season, suffering also, or rather enjoying a vacation. Since therefore I am but mine own Secretary (and what's that?) I were excusable if I writ nothing, since I am so: Besides that, your much knowledge brings you this disadvantage, that as stomachs accustomed to delicacies, finde nothing new or pleasing to them when they are sick; so you can hear nothing from me (though the Countrey perchance make you hungry) which you know not. Therefore in stead of a Letter to you, I send you one to another, to the best Lady, who did me the honour to acknowledge the receit of one of mine, by one of hers; and who only hath power to cast the fetters of verse upon my free meditations: It should give you some delight, and some comfort, because you are the first which see it, and it is the last which you shall see of this kinde from me.

Your very affectionate lover and servant

J. Donne.

Micham *the*

14 August.

XL. To Sir I. H.

Sir,

I Would not omit this, not Commodity, but Advantage of writing to you. This emptinesse in *London*, dignifies any Letter from hence, as in the seasons, earlinesse and latenesse, makes the sowrenesse, and after the sweetnesse of fruits acceptable and gracious. We often excuse and advance mean Authors, by the age in which they lived, so will your love do this Letter; and you will tell your self, that if he which writ it knew wherein he might expresse his affection, or any thing which might have made his Letter welcommer, he would have done it. As it is, you may accept it so, as we do many *China* manufactures, of which when we know no use, yet we satisfie our curiosity in considering them, because we knew not how, nor of what matter they were made. Near great woods and quarries it is no wonder to see faire houses, but in *Holland* which wants both, it is. So were it for me who am as farre removed from Court, and knowledge of forein passages, as this City is now from the face and furniture of a City, to build up a long Letter, and to write of my self were but to inclose a poor handfull of straw for a token in a Letter: yet I will tell you, that I am at *London* onely to provide for Monday, when I shall use that favour which my Lady *Bedford* hath afforded me, of giving her name to my daughter; which I mention to you, as well to shew that I covet any occasion of a gratefull speaking of her favours, as that, because I have thought the day is likely to bring you to *London*, I might tell you, that my poor house is in your way and you shall there finde such company, as (I think) you will not be loth to accompany to *London*.

Your very true friend

J. Donne.

6 Aug. 1608.

XLI. To Sir H. Wootton.

SIR,

That which is at first but a visitation, and a civill office, comes quickly to be a haunting, and an uncivill importunity: my often writing might be subject to such a misinterpretation, if it were not to you, who as you know that the affection which suggests and dictates them, is ever one, and continuall, and uninterrupted, may be pleased to think my Letters so too, and that all the pieces make but one long Letter, and so I know you would not grudge to read any intire book of mine, at that pace, as you do my Letters, which is a leafe a week: especially such Letters as mine, which (perchance out of the dulnesse of the place) are so empty of any relations, as that they oppresse not your meditations, nor discourse, nor memory. You know that for aire we are sure we apprehend and enjoy it, but when this aire is rarified into fire, we begin to dispute whether it be an element, or no: so when Letters have a convenient handsome body of news, they are Letters; but when they are spun out of nothing, they are nothing, or but apparitions, and ghosts, with such hollow sounds, as he that hears them, knows not what they said. You (I think) and I am much of one sect in the Philosophy of love; which though it be directed upon the minde, doth inhere in the body, and find piety entertainment there: so have Letters for their principall office, to be seals and testimonies of mutuall affection, but the materialls and fuell of them should be a confident and mutuall communicating of those things which we know. How shall I then who know nothing write Letters? Sir, I learn knowledge enough out of yours to me. I learn that there is truth and firmnesse and an earnestness of doing good alive in the world; and therefore, since there is so good company in it, I have not so much desire to go out of it, as I had, if my fortune would afford me any room in it. You know I have been no coward, nor unindustrious in attempting that; nor will I give it over yet. If at last, I must confesse, that I dyed ten years ago, yet as the Primitive Church admitted some of the *Jews* Ceremonies not for perpteuall use, but because they would bury the Synagogue honourably, though I dyed at a blow then when my courses were diverted, yet it wil please me a little to have had a long funerall, and to have kept my self so long above ground without putrefaction. But this is melancholique discourse; To change therefore from this Metaphoricall death to the true,

and that with a little more relish of mirth, let me tell you the good nature of the executioner of *Paris*: who when *Vatan* was beheaded, (who dying in the profession of the Religion, had made his peace with God in the prison, and so laid nothing at the place of execution) swore he had rather execute forty Huguenots, then one Catholique, because the Huguenot used so few words, and troubled him so little, in respect of the dilatory ceremonies of the others, in dying. *Cotton* the great Court Jesuit hath so importuned the Q[ueen] to give some modifications to the late interlocutory arrest against the Jesuits, that in his presence, the C[ount] *Soisons*, who had been present in the Court at the time of the arrest, and *Servin* the Kings Advocate, who urged it, and the Premier president, were sent for: They came so well provided with their books, out of which they assigned to the Q. so many, so evident places of seditious doctrine, that the Q. was well satsified, that it was fit by all means to provide against the teaching of the like doctrine in *France*. The D[uke] of *Espernon* is come to *Paris*, with (they say) 600 horse in his train; all which company, came with him into the Court: which is an insolency remarkable here. They say that scarce any of the Princes appear in the streets, but with very great trains. No one enemy could wast the treasures of *France* so much, as so many friends do: for the Q. dares scarce deny any, that so she may have the better leave to make haste to advance her Marquis of *Ancre*, of whose greatnesse, for matter of command, or danger, they have no great fear, he being no very capable nor stirring man: and then for his drawing of great benefits from the Q. they make that use of it, that their suits passe with lesse opposition. I beleeve the treasure is scattered, because I see the future receipt charged with so very many and great pensions. The Q. hath adventured a little to stop this rage of the Princes importunity, by denying a late suit of *Soissons*: which though the other Princes grudge not that *Soisson* should faile, for he hath drawn infinite sums already, yet they resent it somewhat tenderly, that any of them should be denyed, when the Marquis obtains. That which was much observed in the Kings more childish age, when I was last here, by those whom his father appointed to judge, by an assiduous observation, his naturall inclination, is more and more confirmed, that his inclinations are cruell, and tyrannous; and when he is any way affected, his stammering is so extreme, as he can utter nothing. They cannot draw him to look upon a son of the Marquis, whom they have put into his service. And he was so extremely affectionate towards the younger son of *Beaufort*, that they have

removed him to a charge which he hath, as he is made Prieur of *Malta*; but yet there passe such Letters between them, by stealth and practise, as (though it be between children) it is become a matter of State, and much diligence used to prevent the Letters. For the young Marquis of *Vervueil*, the K[ing] speaks often of transplanting him into the Church, and once this Christmas delighted himself to see his young brother in a Cardinalls habit. Sir, it is time to take up, for I know, that any thing, from this place, as soon as it is certain, is stale. I have been a great while more mannerly towards my Lady *Bedford*, then to trouble her with any of mine own verses, but having found these French verses accompanied with a great deal of reputation here, I could not forbear to aske her leave to send them. I writ to you by M^{r} *Pory* the 17 of *Jan.* here, and he carried that Letter to *Paris*, to gather news, like a snowball. He told me that *Pindar* is gone to *Constantinople* with Commission to remove and succeed *Glover*: I am afraid you have neglected that businesse. Continue me in M[r.] *Martins* good opinion. I know I shall never fall from it, by any demerit of mine, and I know I need not fear it, out of any slacknesse or slipperinesse in him, but much businesse may strangle me in him. When it shall not trouble you to write to me, I pray do me the favour to tell me, how many you have received from me, for I have now much just reason to imagine, that some of my Pacquets have had more honour then I wished them: which is to be delivered into the hands of greater personages, then I addressed them unto. Hold me still in your own love, and proceed in that noble testimony of it, of which your Letter by M. *Pory* spoke, (which is the only Letter that I have received, since I came away) and beleeve me that I shall ever with much affection, and much devotion joine both your fortune and your last best happinesse, with the desire of mine own in all my civill and divine wishes as the only retribution in the power of

Your affectionate servant

J. Donne.

XLII. To the Honorable Knight Sir H. Goodere.

SIR,

If I would go out of my way for excuses, or if I did not go out of my way from them; I might avoid writing now because I cannot chuse but know, that you have in this town abler servants, and better understanding the persons and passages of this Court. But my hope is not in the application of other mens merits, to me however abundant. Besides, this town hath since our comming hither, afforded enough for all to say. That which was done here the 25 of *March*, and which was so long called a publication of the marriages, was no otherwise publique then that the Spa[nish] Ambassador, having that day an audience, delivered to the Queen that his Master was well pleased with all those particulars which had been formerly treated. And the French Ambassador in *Spain* is said to have had instruction, to do the same office in that Court, the same day. Since that, that is to say, these 4 last days, it hath been solemnized with more outward bravery then this Court is remembered to have appeared in. The main bravery was the number of horses which were above 800 Caparazond. Before the daies, the town was full of the 5 Challengers cartells, full of Rodomontades: but in the execution, there were noe personall reencounters, nor other triall of any ability, then running at the Quintain, and the Ring. Other particulars of this, you cannot chuse but hear too much, since at this time there come to you so many French men. But lest you should beleeve too much, I present you these 2 precautions, that for their Gendarmery, there was no other trial then I told you; & for their bravery, no true stuffe. You must of necessity have heard often of a Book written against the Popes jurisdiction, about three moneths since, by one *Richer*, a D^{r} and Syndique of the Sorbonists, which Book hath now been censured by an assembly of the Clergie of this Archbishoprick, promoved with so much diligence by the Cardinall *Peroun* [*du Perron*], that for this businesse he hath intermitted his replie to the Kings answer, which now he retires to intend seriously: I have not yet had the honour to kisse his Graces hand, though I have received some half-invitations to do it. *Richer* was first accused to the Parliament, but when it was there required of his delators to insist upon some propositions in his Book, which were either against Scripture, or the Gallican Church, they desisted in that pursuit. But in the censure which the Clergie hath made,

though it be full of modifications and reservations of the rights of the King, and the Gallican Churches, there is this iniquitie, that being to be published by commandment of the Assembly, in all the Churches of *Paris*, which is within that Diocese, and almost all the Curates of the Parishes of *Paris* being Sorbonists, there is by this means a strong party of the Sorbonists themselves raised against *Richer*; yet against this censure, and against three or four which have opposed *Richer* in print, he meditates an answer. Before it should come forth I desired to speak with him, for I had said to some of the Sorbonist of his party, that there was no proposition in his Book, which I could not shew in Catholique authors of 300 years: I had from him an assignation to meet, and at the hour he sent me his excuse, which was, that he had been traduced to have had conference with the Ambassadors of *England*, and the States, and with the D[uke] of *Bovillon*, and that he had accepted a pension of the King of *England*; and withall, that it had been very well testified to him that day, that the Jesuits had offered to corrupt men with rewards to kill him. Which I doubt not but he apprehended for true, because a messenger whom I sent to fixe another time of meeting with him, found him in an extreme trembling, and irresolutions: so that I had no more, but an intreaty to forbear comming to his house, or drawing him out of it, till it might be without danger or observation. They of the Religion held a Synod at this time in this Town, in which the principall businesse is to rectifie, or at least to mature, against their Provinciall Synod, which shall be held in *May*, certain opinions of *Tilenus* a Divine of *Sedan*, with which the Churches of *France* are scandalized. The chief point is, Whether our salvation be to be attributed to the passive merit of Christ, which is his death, or to his active also, which is his fulfilling of the Law. But I doubt not but that will be well composed, if *Tilenus* who is here in person with two other assistants, bring any disposition to submit himself to the Synod, and not onely to dispute. I doe (I thank God) naturally and heartily abhorre all schism in Religion so much, as, I protest, I am sorry to finde this appearance of schism amongst our adversaries the Sorbonists; for I had rather they had held together, to have made a head against the usurpations of the Ro[man] Church, then that their disuniting should so enfeeble them, as that the Parliament should be left alone to stand against those tyrannies. Sir, you will pardon my extravagancies in these relations. I look upon nothing so intentively as these things, nor fals there any thing within my knowledge, which I would conceal from you. Though it concern not you to

know it, yet me thinks it concerns me to tell it. That *Cook* of which you writ to me, is come hither, and hath brought me other Letters, but not those of which you writ to me, which pacquet, he saies, you received again of him; whether by his falshood, or by your diligence in seeking a worthier messenger, I know not; but I am sure I never lost any thing with more sorrow, because I am thereby left still in uncertainties, and irresolutions, of that which I desire much to know in womens businesses. If you write this way any more, chuse no other means, then by M^{r} *Bruer* at the Queens Arms, a Mercer in *Cheapside*: he shall alwaies know where we are, and we are yet in a purpose to go from hence within a fortnight, and dispose our selves to be at *Frankford* the 25 of *May*, when the election of the Emperor shall be there. Though I be meerly passive in all this pilgrimage, yet I shall be willing to advance that design; because upon my promise that I would doe so, Sir *Rob. Rich* gave me his, that he would divert from his way to *Italy* so much, as to be there then. When I came to this Town I found M^{r} *Matthew*, diligent to finde a means to write to you; so that at this time, when there go so many, I cannot doubt but he provides himself, therefore I did not ask his commandement, nor offer him the service of this Pacquet. Sir, you are not evener to your self, in your most generall wishes of your own good, then I am in my particular, of which none rises in me, that is not bent upon your enjoying of peace and reposednesse in your fortunes, in your affections, and in your conscience; more then which I know not how to wish to

Your very affectionate servant and
lover
J. Donne.

Paris *the* 9 Apr.
1612. *here*.

XLIII. To Sir H. Wotton.

Octob. *the* 4th 1622. *almost ad midnight.*

SIR,

All our moralities are but our out-works, our Christianity is our Citadel; a man who considers duty but the dignity of his being a man, is not easily beat from his outworks, but from his Christianity never; and therefore I dare trust you, who contemplates them both. Every distemper of the body now, is complicated with the spleen, and when we were young men we scarce ever heard of the spleen. In our declinations now, every accident is accompanied with heavy clouds of melancholy; and in our youth we never admitted any. It is the spleen of the minde, and we are affected with vapors from thence; yet truly, even this sadnesse that overtakes us, and this yeelding to the sadnesse, is not so vehement a poison (though it be no Physick neither) as those false waies, in which we sought our comforts in our looser daies. You are able to make rules to your self, and our B[lessed] Saviour continue to you an ability to keep within those rules. And this particular occasion of your present sadnesse must be helped by the rule, for, for examples you will scarce finde any, scarce any that is not encombred and distressed in his fortunes. I had locked my self, sealed and secured my self against all possibilities of falling into new debts, and in good faith, this year hath thrown me 400^{l} lower then when I entred this house. I am a Father as well as you, and of children (I humbly thank God) of as good dispositions; and in saying so, I make account that I have taken my comparison as high as I could goe; for in good faith, I beleeve yours to be so: but as those my daughters (who are capable of such considerations) cannot but see my desire to accommodate them in this world, so I think they will not murmure if heaven must be their Nunnery, and they associated to the B. virgins there: I know they would be content to passe their lives in a Prison, rather then I should macerate my self for them, much more to suffer the mediocrity of my house, and my means, though that cannot preferre them: yours are such too, and it need not that patience, for your fortune doth not so farre exercise their patience. But to leave all in Gods hands, from whose hands nothing can be wrung by whining but by praying, nor by praying without the *Fiat voluntas tua*. Sir, you are used to my hand, and, I think have leisure to spend some time in picking out sense, in ragges; else I had written lesse,

and in longer time. Here is room for an *Amen*; the prayer — — so I am going to my bedside to make for all you and all yours, with

Your true friend and servant in Chr. Jesus

J. Donne.

XLIV. A. V. Merced.

SIR,

I Write not to you out of my poor Library, where to cast mine eye upon good Authors kindles or refreshes sometimes meditations not unfit to communicate to near friends; nor from the high way, where I am contracted, and inverted into my self; which are my two ordinary forges of Letters to you. But I write from the fire side in my Parler, and in the noise of three gamesome children; and by the side of her, whom because I have transplanted into a wretched fortune, I must labour to disguise that from her by all such honest devices, as giving her my company, and discourse, therefore I steal from her, all the time which I give this Letter, and it is therefore that I take so short a list, and gallop so fast over it. I have not been out of my house since I received your pacquet. As I have much quenched my senses, and disused my body from pleasure, and so tried how I can indure to be mine own grave, so I try now how I can suffer a prison. And since it is but to build one wall more about our soul, she is still in her own Center, how many circumferences soever fortune or our own perversnesse cast about her. I would I could as well intreat her to go out, as she knows whither to go. But if I melt into a melancholy whilest I write, I shall be taken in this manner: and I sit by one too tender towards these impressions, and it is so much our duty, to avoid all occasions of giving them sad apprehensions, as S. *Hierome* accuses *Adam* of no other fault in eating the Apple, but that he did it *Ne contristaretur delicias suas*. I am not carefull what I write, because the inclosed Letters may dignifie this ill favoured bark, and they need not grudge so course a countenance, because they are now to accompany themselves, my man fetched them, and therefore I can say no more of them then themselves say. M^ris^ *Meauly* intreated me by her Letter to hasten hers, as I think, for by my troth I cannot read it. My Lady was dispatching in so much haste for *Twicknam*, as she gave no word to a Letter which I sent with yours; of Sir *Tho. Bartlet*, I can say nothing, nor of the plague, though your Letter bid me: but that he diminishes, the other increases, but in what proportion I am not clear. To them at *Hammersmith*, and M^ris^ *Herbert* I will do your command. If I have been good in hope, or can promise any little offices in the future probably, it is comfortable, for I am the worst present man in the world; yet the instant, though it be nothing,

joynes times together, and therefore this unprofitableness, since I have been, and will still indevour to be so, shall not interrupt me now from being

Your servant and lover

J. Donne.

XLV. To the best Knight Sir H. Wootton.

SIR,

When I saw your good Countesse last, she let me think that her message by her foot-man would hasten you up. And it furthered that opinion in me, when I knew how near M. *Mathews* day of departing this kingdome was. To counterpoyse both these, I have a little Letter from you brought to me to *Micham* yesterday, but left at my lodging two days sooner: and because that speaks nothing of your return, I am content to be perplexed in it: and as in all other, so in this perplexity to do that which is safest. To me it is safest to write, because it performes a duty, and leaves my conscience well: and though it seem not safest for the Letter, which may perish, yet I remember that in the Crociate [Crusade] for the warres in the *Holy Land*, and so in all Pilgrimages enterprised in devotion, he which dies in the way, enjoys all the benefit and indulgences which the end did afford. Howsoever, all that can encrease my merit; for, as where they immolate men, it is a scanter devotion, to sacrifice one of many slaves or of many children, or an onely child, then to beget and bring up one purposely to sacrifice it, so if I ordain this Letter purposely for destruction, it is the largest expressing of that kinde of piety, and I am easie to beleeve (because I wish it) your hast hither: Not that I can fear any slacknesse in that business which drew you down, because your fortune and honour are a paire of good spurs to it; but here also you have both true businesse and many *Quasi negotia*, which go two and two to a businesse; which are visitations, and such, as though they be not full businesses, yet are so near them that they serve as for excuses, in omissions of the other. As when abjuration was in use in this land, the State and law was satisfied if the abjuror came to the sea side, and waded into the sea, when windes and tydes resisted, so we think our selves justly excusable to our friends and our selves, if when we should do businesse, we come to the place of businesse, as Courts and the houses of great Princes and officers. I do not so much intimate your infirmity in this, as frankly confesse mine own. The master of Latine language says, *Oculi & aures aliorum te speculantur & custodiunt*. So those two words are synonimous, & only the observation of others upon me, is my preservation from extream idlenesse, else I professe, that I hate businesse so much, as I am sometimes glad to remember that the *Roman Church* reads that verse *A negotio perambulante*

in tenebris, which we reade from the pestilence walking by night, so equall to me do the plague and businesse deserve avoiding, but you will neither beleeve that I abhor businesse, if I enlarge this Letter, nor that I would afford you that ease which I affect. Therefore returne to your pleasures.

Your unprofitablest friend

J. Donne.

March 14. 1607.

*It is my third Letter: which I tell you, because I found not M^r^* Rogers, *but left the Letter which I sent last, with a stranger at* Cliffords Inne.

XLVI. To Sir H. G.

Sir,

This 14 of *November* last I received yours of the 9, as I was in the street going to sup with my Lady *Bedford*; I found all that company forepossessed with a wonder why you came not last saturday. I perceive, that as your intermitting your Letters to me, gave me reason to hope for you, so some more direct addresse or conscience of your businesse here, had imprinted in them an assurance of your comming. This Letter shall but talke, not discourse; it shall but gossip, not consider, nor consult, so it is made halfe with a prejudice of being lost by the way. The King is gone this day for *Royston*: and hath left with the Queen a commandment to meditate upon a Masque for Christmas, so that they grow serious about that already; that will hasten my Lady *Bedfords* journey, who goes within ten days from hence to her Lord, but by reason of this, can make no long stay there. *Justinian* the *Venetian* [ambassador] is gone hence, and one *Carraw* [*Carow*] come in his place: that State hath taken a fresh offence at a Friar, who refused to absolve a Gentleman, because he would not expresse in confession, what books of Father *Paul*, and such, he knew to be in the hands of any others; the State commanded him out of that territory in three hours warning, and he hath now submitted himself, and is returned as prisoner for *Mantua*, and so remains as yet. Sir *H. Wootton* who writ hither, addes also that upon his knowledge there are 14000 as good Protestants as he in that State. The Duke *Joyeuse* is dead, in *Primont* [*Peidmont*], returning from *Rome*, where M. *Mole* [*Molé*] who went with the L[ord] *Rosse*, is taken into the Inquisition, and I see small hope of his recovery, for he had in some translations of *Plessis* books talked of *Babylon* and Antichrist. Except it fall out that one *Strange* a Jesuit in the Tower, may be accepted for him. To come a little nearer my self, Sir *Geffery Fenton* one of his Majesties Secretaries in *Ireland* is dead; and I have made some offer for the place, in preservation whereof, as I have had occasion to imploy all my friends, so I have not found in them all (except *Bedford*) more hast and words (for when those two are together, there is much comfort even in the least) then in the L. *Hay*. In good faith he promised so roundly, so abundantly, so profusely, as I suspected him, but performed what ever he

undertook, (and my requests were the measures of his undertakings) so readily and truly, that his complements became obligations, and having spoke like a Courtier, did like a friend. This I tell you, because being farre under any ability of expressing my thankfulnesse to him by any proportionall service, I do, as much as I can, thank him by thanking of you, who begot, or nursed these good impressions of me in him. Sir, as my discretion would do, my fortune doth bring all my debts into one hand, for I owe you what ever Court friends do for me, yea, whatsoever I do for myself, because you almost importune me, to awake and stare the Court in the face. I know not yet what conjecture to make of the event. But I am content to go forward a little more in the madnesse of missing rather then not pretend; and rather wear out, then rust. It is extreme late; and as this Letter is nothing, so if ever it come to you, you will know it without a name, and therefore I may end it here.

XLVII. To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.

SIR,

Though you escape my lifting up of your latch by removing, you cannot my Letters; yet of this Letter I do not much accuse my self, for I serve your Commandment in it, for it is only to convey to you this paper opposed to those, with which you trusted me. It is (I cannot say the waightyest, but truly) the saddest lucubration and nights passage that ever I had. For it exercised those hours, which, with extreme danger to her, whom I should hardly have abstained from recompensing for her company in this world, with accompanying her out of it, encreased my poor family with a son. Though her anguish, and my fears, and hopes, seem divers and wild distractions from this small businesse of your papers, yet because they all narrowed themselves, and met in *Via regia*, which is the consideration of our selves, and God, I thought it time not unfit for this despatch. Thus much more then needed I have told you, whilest my fire was lighting at Tricombs [at] 10 a clock.

Yours ever intirely

J. Donne.

XLVIII. To the Honourable Knight H. G.

SIR,

Your Son left here a Letter for me, from you. But I neither discern by it that you have received any of mine lately; which have been many, and large, and too confident to be lost, especially since, (as I remember) they always conveyed others to that good Lady; neither do I know where to finde, by any diligence, your sons lodging. But I hope he will apprehend that impossibility in me, and finde me here, where he shall also finde as much readinesse to serve him, as at *Polesworth*. This Letter of yours makes me perceive, that that Lady hath expressed her purpose to you in particular, for the next term. Accordingly, I make my promises: for since one that meant but to flatter, told an Emperour, that his benefits were to be reckoned from the day of the promise, because he never failed, it were an injury from me to the constancy of that noble Lady, if I should not, as soon as the promises, do some act of assurance of the performance; which I have done, as I say, in fixing times to my creditors; for by the end of next terme, I will make an end with the world, by Gods grace. I lack you here, for my L. of *Dorset*, he might make a cheap bargain with me now, and disingage his honour, which in good faith, is a little bound, because he admitted so many witnesses of his large disposition towards me. They are preparing for a Masque of Gentlemen: in which M. *Villars* is, and M. *Karre*, whom I told you before my L. Chamberlain had brought into the bed-chamber. I pray, if you make not so thick goings as you used, send this Letter to that good woman, for it is not only mine. If I could stay this Letter an hour, I should send you something of *Savoy*, for Sir *Rob. Rich*, who is now come from Court, hath laid a commandment upon me by message to waite upon him; and I know his busines, because he never sought me, but in one kinde. But the importunity of the houre excuses me, and delivers you from further trouble from

Your very true friend and servant

J. Donne.

13 Decemb.

XLIX. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Love to give you advantages upon me, therefore I put my self in need of another pardon from you, by not comming to you; yet I am scarce guilty enough to spend much of your vertue from you, because I knew not of your being come till this your Letter told me so, in the midst of dinner at *Peckham*, this Monday. Sir, I am very truly yours; if you have overvalued me in any capacity, I will do what I can to overtake your hopes of me. I wish my self whatsoever you wish me; and so I do, what ever you wish your self. I am prisoner and close; else I had not needed this pardon, for I long much, and much more by occasion of your Letter, to see you: when you finde that good Lady emptiest of businesse and pleasure, present my humble thanks; you can do me no favour, which I need not, nor any, which I cannot have some hope to deserve, but this; for I have made her opinion of me, the ballance by which I weigh my self. I will come soon enough to deliver my thanks to Sir *J. Harr*[*ington*] for your ease, whom I know I have pained with an ilfavoured Letter; but my heart hath one style, and character, and is yours in wishing, and in thankfulnesse.

J. Donne.

Peckham *Monday afternoon.*

L. To the Honourable Sir R. D.

Sir,

I Gave no answer to the Letter I received from you upon Tuesday, both because I had in it no other commandment by it but to deliver your Letter therein, which I did, and because that Letter found me under very much sadnesse, which (according to the proportion of ills that fall upon me) is since also increased, so that I had not written now, if I had been sure to have been better able to write next week, which I have not much appearance of: yet there was committed to my disposition (that is, left at my house in my absence) a Letter from Sir *W. Lover*, but it was some hours after all possibility of sending it by the carrier, so that M[r] *W. Stanhope* giving me the honour of a visite at that time, and being instantly to depart, for your parts, did me the favour to undertake the delivery of it to you. With me, Sir, it is thus: there is not one person (besides my self) in my house well. I have already lost half a child, and with that mischance of hers, my wife fallen into an indisposition, which would afflict her much, but that the sicknesse of her children stupefies her: of one of which, in good faith, I have not much hope. This meets a fortune so ill provided for physique and such relief, that if God should ease us with burials, I know not well how to performe even that. I flatter my self in this, that I am dying too: nor can I truly dye faster, by any waste, then by losse of children. But Sir, I will mingle no more of my sadness to you, but wil a little recompense it, by telling you that my L. *Harrington*, of whom a few days since they were doubtfull, is so well recovered that now they know all his disease to be the Pox, and Measels mingled. This I heard yesterday: for I have not been there yet. I came as near importunity as I could, for an answer from Essex house, but this was all, that he should see you shortly himselfe.

Your servant

J. Donne.

I cannot tell you so much, as you tell me, of any thing from my Lord of Som[erset] *since the Epithalamion, for I heard nothing.*

LI. To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.

Sir,

I Have but one excuse for not sending you the Sermon that you do me the honour to command, and I foresee that before I take my hand from this paper, I shall lose the benefit of that excuse; it is that for more than twenty days, I have been travelled [travailed] with a pain, in my right wrist, so like the Gout, as makes me unable to write. The writing of this Letter will implore a commentary for that, that I cannot write legibly; for that I cannot write much, this Letter will testifie against me. Sir, I beseech you, at first, tell your company, that I decline not the service out of sullennesse nor lazinesse, nor that any fortune damps me so much, as that I am not sensible of the honour of their commanding it, but a meer inexperience whether I be able to write eight hours or no; but I will try next week, and either do it, for their service, or sink in their service. This is Thursday: and upon Tuesday my Lady *Bedford* came to this town: this afternoon I presented my service to her, by M^ris^ *Withrington*: and so asked leave to have waited upon them at supper: but my messenger found them ready to go into their Coach: so that a third Letter which I received from M^ris^ *Dudley*, referring me to M^ris^ *Withringtons* relation of all that State, I lose it till their return to this town. To clear you in that wherein I see by your Letter that I had not well expressed my self in mine, Sir *Ed. Herbert* writ to Sir *Ed. Sackvil*, not to presse the King to fix any certain time of sending him, till he was come over, and had spoken with the King: Sir *Ed. Sackvil* collects upon that, that Sir *Ed. H.* means to go again; I think it is only, that he would have his honour so saved, as not to seem to be recalled, by having a successor, before he had emptied the place. We hear nothing from my Lord of *Doncaster*; nor have we any way to send to him. I have not seen my Lady *Doncaster*, for she crost to *Penhurst*, and from thence to *Petworth*; my Lady *Isabella* came to this Town, where, before her comming, a Letter attended her from my Lady of *Tichfield*: and thither she went, with their servants, who staid her comming. Hither came lately Letters with goodspeed from *Vienna*, in which there is no mention of any such defeat, as in rumour C[ount] *Mansfeld* hath been said to have given to the D[uke] of *Bavyer* [*Bavaria*] but their forces were then within such distance, as may have procured something before this time. Those which watched advantages in

the Court of the Emperour, have made that use of C[ount] *Mansfelds* proceedings, as that my Lord *Digby* complains, that thereby the forwardnesse in which his negotiation was, is somewhat retarded. He proceeds from thence into *Spain*. The D. of *Bavyer* hath presented the Emperour an account of 1200^{ml} [£1,200,000] sterling in that warre, to be reimbursed: and finding the Palatinate to be in treaty, hath required a great part of *Austria* for his security, and they say, it is so transacted; which is a good signe of a possibility in the restitution of the Palatinate. For any thing I discern, their fears are much greater from *Hungary*, then from *Bohemia*; and the losse of Canon, in a great proportion, and other things, at the death of *Bucquoy*, was much greater, then they suffered to be published. We here *Spinola* is passed over at *Rhenebery* [*Rheinsberg*]; if it be so, they are no longer distracted, whether he would bend upon *Juliers*, or the Palatinate. I know not what you hear from your noble son in law, who sees those things clearly in himself, and in the near distance; but I hear here, that the King hath much lost the affection of the English in those parts. Whether it proceed from any sowrenesse in him, or that they be otherwise taken off, from applying themselves to him, I know not. My Lord of S. Albons [*St. Albans*] hath found so much favour as that a pension of 2000 *l.* will be given him; he desires that he might have it for [— —] years, that so he might transferre it upon his creditors, or that in place of it he might have 8000 *l.* for he hath found a disposition in his creditors (to whom I hear he hath paid 3000 *l.* since by retyring) to accept 8000 *l.* for all his debts, which are three times as much. I have been some times with my L. of *Canterbury*, since by [*sic*] accident, to give you his own words. I see him retain his former cheerfulnesse here and at *Croydon*, but I do not hear from Court, that he hath any ground for such a confidence, but that his case may need favour, and not have it. That place, and *Bedington*, and *Chelsey*, and Highgate, where that very good man my Lord *Hobard* is, and *Hackney*, with the M[aster] of the Rolls, and my familiar *Peckham*, are my circumferrence. No place so eccentrique to me, as that I lye just at *London*; and with those fragmentary recreations I must make shift to recompense the missing of that contentment which your favour opens to me, and my desire provokes me to, the kissing of your hands at *Polesworth*. My daughter *Constance* is at this time with me, for the emptinesse of the town hath made me, who otherwise live upon the almes of others, a housekeeper, for a moneth; and so she is my

servant below stairs, and my companion above: she was at the table with me, when your Letter was brought, and I pay her a piece of her petition in doing her this office, to present her service to my Lady *Nethersoles*, and her very good sister. But that she is gone to bed two hours before I writ this, she should have signed with such a hand as your daughter *Mary* did to me, that which I testifie for her, that she is as affectionate a servant to them all, as their goodnesse hath created any where. Sir, I shall recompense my tediousnesse, in closing mine eyes with a prayer for yours, as for mine own happinesse, for I am almost in bed; if it were my last bed, and I upon my last businesse there, I should not omit to joyn you with

Your very humble and very thankfull
servant in Christ Jesus
J. Donne.

Aug. 30. 1611.

LII. To his honourable friend S^r^ H. G.

SIR,

To you that are not easily scandalized, and in whom, I hope, neither my Religion nor Morality can suffer, I dare write my opinion of that Book in whose bowels you left me. It hath refreshed, and given new justice to my ordinary complaint, That the Divines of these times, are become meer Advocates, as though Religion were a temporall inheritance; they plead for it with all sophistications, and illusions and forgeries: And herein are they likest Advocates, that though they be feed by the way, with Dignities, and other recompenses, yet that for which they plead is none of theirs. They write for Religion, without it. In the main point in question, I think truly there is a perplexity (as farre as I see yet) and both sides may be in justice, and innocence; and the wounds which they inflict upon the adverse part, are all *se defendendo*: for, clearly, our State cannot be safe without the Oath; since they professe, that Clergie-men, though Traitors, are no Subjects, and that all the rest may be none to morrow. And, as clearly, the Supremacy which the Ro[man] Church pretend, were diminished, if it were limited; and will as ill abide that, or disputation, as the Prerogative of temporall Kings, who being the onely judges of their prerogative, why may not Roman Bishops, (so enlightened as they are presumed by them) be good witnesses of their own supremacie, which is now so much impugned? But for this particular Author, I looked for more prudence, and humane wisdome in him, in avoiding all miscitings, or misinterpretings, because at this time, the watch is set, and every bodies hammer is upon that anvill; and to dare offend in that kinde now, is, for a theef to leave the covert, and meet a strong hue and cry in the teeth: and yet truly this man is extremely obnoxious in that kinde; for, though he have answered many things fully, (as no book ever gave more advantage then that which he undertook) and abound in delicate applications, and ornaments, from the divine and prophane authors, yet being chiefly conversant about two points, he prevaricates in both. For, for the matter, which is the first, he referres it intirely, and namely, to that which D[ean] *Morton* hath said therein before, and so leaves it roundly: And for the person (which is the second) upon whom he amasses as many opprobries, as any other could deserve, he pronounceth, that he will account any answer from his adversary, slaunder,

except he do (as he hath done) draw whatsoever he saith of him, from Authors of the same Religion, and in print: And so, he having made use of all the Quodlibetaries, imputations against the other, cannot be obnoxious himself in that kinde, and so hath provided safely. It were no service to you, to send you my notes upon the Book, because they are sandy, and incoherent ragges, for my memory, not for your judgment; and to extend them to an easinesse, and perspicuity, would make them a Pamphlet, not a Letter. I will therefore deferre them till I see you; and in the mean time, I will adventure to say to you, without inserting one unnecessary word, that the Book is full of falsifications in words, and in sense, and of falshoods in matter of fact, and of inconsequent and unscholarlike arguings, and of relinquishing the King, in many points of defence, and of contradiction of himself, and of dangerous and suspected Doctrine in Divinitie, and of silly ridiculous triflings, and of extreme flatteries, and of neglecting better and more obvious answers, and of letting slip some enormous advantages which the other gave, and he spies not. I know (as I begun) I speak to you who cannot be scandalized, and that neither measure Religion (as it is now called) by Unitie, nor suspect Unity, for these interruptions. Sir, not onely a Mathematique point, which is the most indivisible and unique thing which art can present, flowes into every line which is derived from the Center, but our soul which is but one, hath swallowed up a Negative, and feeling soul; which was in the body before it came, and exercises those faculties yet; and God himselfe, who only is one, seems to have been eternally delighted, with a disunion of persons. They whose active function it is, must endevour this unity in Religion: and we at our lay Altars (which are our tables, or bedside, or stools, wheresoever we dare prostrate our selves to God in prayer) must beg it of him: but we must take heed of making misconclusions upon the want of it: for, whether the Maior and Aldermen fall out, (as with us and the Puritans; Bishops against Priests) or the Commoners voyces differ who is Maior, and who Aldermen, or what their Jurisdiction, (as with the Bishop of *Rome*, or whosoever) yet it is still one Corporation.

Your very affectionate servant and
lover
J. Donne.

Micham, Thursday
late.

Never leave the remembrance of my poor service unmentioned when you see the good Lady.

LIII. To S^r^ T. H.

SIR,

This evening, which is *5 October*, I finde your Letter of *Michaelmas* day, and though I see by it, that it is a return of a Letter, not of the last weeks, and thereupon make account, that my last weeks Letter hath satisfied you in some things which this Letter commands, concerning *Pauls*, yet for other things I would give you a drowsie relation, for it is that time of night, tho[u]gh I called it evening. At the Kings going from hence, upon *Munday* last, we made account to have seen Sir *John Sutclin* Secretary, and Sir *Rob. Weston* Chancellor of the Exchequer, but they are not done, but both are fixed: my L. *Cranfield* received his staffe, with these two suits obtained from the King, That all Assignations might be transferred into the Exchequer, and so no paiments charged upon the Customes, nor Receivers, nor the Court of Wards, &c. And that for a time there might be a damp cast upon Pensions, till they might be considered. In the Low Countries the Armies stirre not. In the Palatinate Sir *H. Vere* attempting the regaining of *Stenie* Castle, was surprised with the Enemy in so much strength, that they write it over for a Master-piece, that he was able to make a retreat to *Manheme* [*Mannheim*]: so that now the Enemy is got on that side the River which *Heydelberg* is on, and I know nothing that can stand in his way. My L. *Digby* comes from *Vienna*, before he goes into *Spain*, by Count *Mansfield*, by the Palatinate, by *Paris*; and therefore upon his comming, I shall be able to say something to you. In Sir *John Sutclin* I presume you see an end of Sir *Ro. Naunton*, and we see an end of M^r^ *Tho. Murray* too; I beleeve he comes no more to the Prince. For the triall of my L. of *Canterburies* irregularity, there is a Commission to sixe Bishops, *London*, *Winchester*, *Rochester*, and three onely elect, *Lincoln*, *S. Davids*, *and Exeter*: two Judges, L. *Hobard*, and *Dodridge*; two Civilians, Sir *H. Martin*, and D[r.] *Steward*. The consecration of these elect Bishops, and consequently, my being Dean, must attend the issue of this Commission. Sir *Tho. Roe* is gone. The Proclamations of putting off the Parliament, till *February*, are like to outrun this Letter. It is very late; and it is one act, to say Grace after Supper, and to commend my self into the hands of my

blessed Saviour, in my bed, and so close this Letter, and mine eies, with the same blessing upon all your family. Amen

Your poor servant in Chr. Jes.

J. Donne.

LIV. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Receive this 14 your Letter of the 10. yet I am not come to an understanding how these Carriers keep daies: for I would fain think that the Letters which I sent upon *Thursday* last might have given you such an account of the state of my family, that you needed not have asked by this. But Sir, it hath pleased God to adde thus much to my affliction, that my wife hath now confessed her self to be extremely sick; she hath held out thus long to assist me, but is now overturn'd, & here we be in two beds, or graves; so that God hath marked out a great many of us, but taken none yet. I have passed ten daies without taking any thing; so that I think no man can live more thriftily. I have purged and vexed my body much since I writ to you, and this day I have missed my fit: and this is the first time, that I could discern any intermission. This is enough, the rest I will spend upon the parts of your Letter: Your Letter at *Pauls* is delivered. In the History of that remove, this onely perchance may be news to you, that M^{r} *Alabaster* hath got of the King the Deans best Living worth above 300^{l}, which the Dean had good hope to have held a while. Of that which you writ concerning a Book of the Nullity, I have heard no syllable any other way. If you have received it by good hands, I beleeve it with you: otherwise the report is naturally very incredible. Though the answering of it be a work for some, both of better abilities really, and in common reputation also, yet I was like enough to have had some knowledge thereof. You mention again some thing which it seems you are not willing I should understand of my Lady *Huntington*: some of your former Letters, have spoken of some other former Letters, (which I never saw) which speak of the matter as of a history and thing done; and these later Letters speak of it Prophetically, as of a future contingent. I am glad the often remembrance of it, gives me often occasion of thankfulnesse to her, for retaining me in her memory, and of professing my self in my end, and ways, her most humble servant. For your Parliament businesse, I should be very sorry, if you came not up, because I presume you had seposed many businesses, to have been done at that time; but in the ways wherein you have gone, I protest I am diffident. For first, for that L[ord] whom you solicited by Letters through me, I tell you with the whispering of a secret, but the confidence of a friend, that you will be

deceived whensoever you think that he should take any delight in doing you a courtesie. And I am afraid, the true heartinesse of the other noble Gentleman M. *Howard*, will be of small use in this perticular, if he have but solicited my L. his father to reserve a blanke for his friend, for my L. hath suffered more denialls, even in places where he sent names, then could have been feared. Besides M. *How*[*ard*] hath not written to his father therein, but to M. *Woodward*, who perceiving those Letters to be written, before his purpose of being Knight for the shire, thinkes these Letters extinguished. You made me offer so long since of a place (it was when you writ into the west) yet I could think it no merit to have offered you one since, otherwise it hath been since in my power, for since the M^{r} of the Rolls provided me one, Sir *Ed. Herbert*, who makes haste away, made me a present of his; and I have had a third offer. The businesse of your last weeks Letter concerning the widow, is not a subject for a feverous mans consideration. Therefore I only send you back those Letters which you sent; and aske you leave to make this which I am fain to call my good day, so much truly good, as to spend the rest of it with D[octor] *Layfield*, who is, upon my summons, at this hour come to me. My Physicians have made me afraid, that this disease will work into my head, and so put me into lightnesses, therefore I am desirous that I be understood before any such danger overtake me.

Your true poor servant

J. Donne.

14. March.

LV. To the Honourable Knight Sir H. G.

Sir,

After I have told you, that the Lady *Hay* dyed last Tuesday, and that to her end she was anguished with the memory of the execution of that fellow which attempted her in the coach, I have told you all which hath fallen out here. Except between you and me that may be worth the telling, that my L. Chancellor gave me so noble and so ready a dispatch, accompanied with so fatherly advise, and remorse for my fortunes, that I am now, like an Alchymist, delighted with discoveries by the way, though I attain not mine end. It spent me so little time after your going, that, although you speak in your Letter of good dispatch in your going, yet I might have overtaken you. And though perchãce if I had gone, it might have been inconvenient for me, to have put my self into my L. Chamberlains presence, if that sicknesse be earnest at *Ashby*, and so I should nothing have advanced my businesse, yet I should have come to that noble Lady with better confidence, and more assurance of a pardon, when I had brought a conscience, that I came despoiled of all other respects, only to kisse her hands, in whose protection I am, since I have nor desire other station, then a place in her good opinion. I took so good contentment in the fashion which my L. Chancellor used towards me, that out of a voluptuous loathnesse to let that taste go out of my mouth, I forbear to make any further tryall in that businesse till the King come into these quarters. So that, Sir, I am here in place to serve you, if either I be capable of your commandments, or this town give any thing worth the writing. As often as you see your noble friend, and her good sister, allow my name a room in your discourse; it is a short one, and you will soon have done. But tell them not my desire to do them service, for then you engage your self in a longer discourse, then I am worthy. Only in pursuit of your commandment I sent the Paquet to the Post, for in mine own understanding, there should appear small hope of arriving by that way, except you know otherwise that the LL. [Lords] mean to make some stay in their return, in those parts: but the Letter is brought back again, for the Post went away yesterday, and they knew of no occasion of sending till next week. Therefore except I can inform my self of some good means, I will retain it, till I have a fresh commandment from you. I see M. *Taverner* still in this town, the Lady *Carey* went from hence but yesterday. I am in some

perplexity what to doe with this pacquet, till some good fortune, or your Letters clear me.

Your humble servant

J. Donne.

Aug. 19.

LVI. To Sir H. Goodere at Polesworth.

SIR,

It is true that M. *Gherard* told you, I had that commandment from the King signified to me by my L[ord] and am still under it, and we are within fourteen days of our time for going. I leave a scattered flock of wretched children, and I carry an infirme and valetudinary body, and I goe into the mouth of such adversaries, as I cannot blame for hating me, the Jesuits, and yet I go. Though this be no service to my Lord: yet I shall never come nearer doing him a service, nor do any thing liker a service then this. Yesterday we had news by Sir *Nowell Carou* [*Noel Caron*], from *Paris*, that the D[uke] of *Savoy* was elected King of *Bohemia*; which would cut off a great part of the occasion of our going: but it is not much credible in it self, nor at all beleeved here, because it is not signified from *Savoy*, nor *Heidelberg*. Since M. *Gher* [*Mr. Gerrard*] continues your Gazittier, I need tell you nothing of the *Q*[*ueen*] of *Frances* estate. For your commandment in memory of M. *Martin*, I should not have sate so many processes, if I could incline my thoughts that way. It is not lazinesse, it is not gravity, nor coldnesse towards his memory, or your service; for I have thought of it oftener, and longer, then I was wont to do in such things, and nothing is done. Your last pacquet, in which your daughter and I were joynt-commissioners, was brought to me, because she was at *Hampton*, with the Queens body: but I sent her part to her, and my *La*[*dy*] *Uvedalls* to her, who presents her service to you by me now, and says she will write next week, and so will I too, by Gods grace. You forget me absolutely and intirely, whensoever you forget me to that noble Countesse. God blesse you in all, *Amen*.

Your true servant in Jes. Chr.

J. Donne.

9 Martii.

LVII. To the best Knight Sir H. G.

SIR,

At your conveniency, I pray send my Lady *Bedford* this inclosed, but be pleased to put your self to some inconvenience, (if it be so) to kisse my Lady *Ruthins* [*Ruthyn's*] hands in my name, and to present my very humble service to her, and tell her, that no ill conscience of having deserved her, but only an obedience to her commandments, keeps me from saying to her self thus much; that this day I received a letter from my *L*[*ord*] of *Kent*, written yesterday at *Wrest*: in that his Lordship[s] sends me word, that that favour which he hath formerly done me, in giving me *Blouham* [*Blonham*], is now likely to fall upon me, because the Incumbent is dangerously ill: and because this is the season in which he removes from *Wrest* thither, he desires (for I give you his own word) that he may be accommodate there, (if it fall now) as heretofore. Out of my absolute and intire readiness to serve that family, I sent back his messenger with this answer, that I esteemed it a great part of my good fortune, that I should become worthy to be commanded by him. If my Lady will be pleased to direct me in what particular manner I may best serve her purposes, I shall gladly waite upon her at any time, to receive her command with as much devotion and thankfulnesse as I received the benefit. I beseech you make her beleeve it, as in any place you beleeve

Your poor servant in Chr. Jes.

J. Donne.

26 Febr. 1621.

LVIII. To my best of friends Sir H. G.

Sir,

I Heard not from you this week; therefore I write more willingly, because it hath in it so much more merit. And I might do it very cheaply, since to convey to you this Letter, which mine hath the honour to bring, any little Letter would serve, and be acceptable for that. Because it came not last week, I went now to solicite it, and she sent it me next day with some thankes, and some excuse that she knew not me, when I was with her. You know, I do not easily put my self into those hazards, nor do much brag of my valor now, otherwise then I purposed it for a service to you. The newest thing that I know in the world, is my new son: whose mothers being well takes off from me any new waight upon my fortune. I hear in Newgate, that M. *Mathew* is dead. The Catholiques beleeve it there: perchance out of a custome of credulity. But the report is close prisoner; for I never met it abroad. This is my third letter, all which I sent by *Spelty* whom my boy found at *Abington* house. I have now two of the best happinesses which could befall me, upon me; which are, to be a widower and my wife alive, which may make you know, that it is but for your ease, that this letter is no longer, in this leasure in which (having nothing else to write) I might vary a thousand ways that I am

Your very affectionate servant

J. Donne.

Monday at night.

LIX. To my worthy friend G. K.

SIR,

I Receive this heare [hour] that I begin this return, your Letter by a servant of Sir *G. Greseley*, by whom also I hasten this dispatch. This needs no enlargement since it hath the honour to convey one from M. *Gherard*. But though by telling me, it was a bold letter, I had leave to open it, and that I have a little itch to make some animadversions & Criticismes upon it (as that there is a ciphar too much in the sum of the Kings debts, and such like) yet since my eyes do easily fall back to their distemper, and that I am this night to sup at Sir *Ar. Ingrams*, I had rather forfeit their little strength at his supper, then with writing such impertinencies: the best spending them, is upon the rest of your Letter, to which, Sir, I can only say in generall, that Some appearances have been here, of some treatise concerning this Nullity, which are said to proceed from *Geneva*; but are beleeved to have been done within doors, by encouragements of some whose names I will not commit to this letter. My poor study having lyen that way, it may prove possible that my weak assistance may be of use in this matter, in a more serious fashion, then an Epithalamion. This made me therefore abstinent in that kinde; yet by my troth, I think I shall not scape. I deprehend in my self more then an alacrity, a vehemency to do service to that company; and so, I may finde reason to make rime. If it be done, I see not how I can admit that circuit of sending them to you, to be sent hither; that seems a kinde of praying to Saints, to whom God must tell first, that such a man prays to them to pray to him. So that I shall lose the honour of that conveyance; but, for recompense, you shall scape the danger of approving it. My next Letter shall say more of this. This shall end with delivering you the remembrance of my Lady *Bartlet*, who is present at the sealing hereof.

Your very true and affectionate servant

J. Donne.

Jan. 19.

Which name when there is any empty corner in your discourse with that noble Lady at Ashby, *I humbly beseech you to present to her as one more devoted to her service then perchance you will say.*

LX. To Sir G. B.

SIR,
Between the time of making up my other Letters, and the hour that your man limited me to call for them, came to my house an other pacquet directed to him: for by this time, the carrier is as wise, as his horse, to go to the house that he hath used to go. I found liberty in the superscription to open, and so I did; but for that part which concerns him, I must attend his comming hither, for I know not where to seek him; and besides, I have enough to say for that part which concerns my self. Sir, even in the Letter it self to me, I deprehend much inclination, to chide me: and it is but out of your habit of good language that you spare me. So little occasion as that postscript of mine, could not bring you so near to it, if nothing else were mistaken, which (so God help me) was so little, that I remember not what it was, and I would no more hear again what I write in an officious Letter, then what I said at a drunken supper. I had no purpose to exercise your diligence in presenting my name to that Lady, but either I did, or should have said, that I writ onely to fill up any empty corner in your discourse. So, Sir, the reading of the Letter, was a kinde of travell to me, but when I came to the paper inclosed, I was brought to bed of a monster. To expresse my self vehemently quickly, I must say, that I can scarce think, that you have read M. *Gherards* letter rightly, therefore I send you back your own again. I will not protest against my being such a knave, for no man shall have that from me, if he expect it: but I will protest against my being such a fool, as to depose any thing in him with hope of locking it up, and against that lownesse, of seeking reputation by so poor a way. I am not so sorry, that I am a narrow man, as that for all the narrownesse, you have not seen through me yet, nor known me perfectly; for I might think by this, (if I had not other testimony) that I have been little in your contemplation. Sixteen letters from M. *Gherard*, could not (I think) perswade a *Middlesex* Jury of so much dishonesty in

Your true servant
J. Donne.

LXI. To the Honourable Knight Sir G. P.

SIR,

I Would have intermitted this week without writing, if I had not found the name of my Lady *Huntington* in your Letter. The devotion which I owe, and (in good faith) pay in my best prayers for her good in all kinde awakens me to present my humble thanks for this, that her Ladiship retains my name in her memory: she never laid obligation upon any man, readier to expresse his acknowledgement of them, to any servant of her servants; I am bound to say much of this, for your indemnity; because though I had a little preparation to her knowledge in the house where I served at first, yet I think, she took her characters of me, from you: And, at what time soever she thought best of me in her life, I am better than that, for my goodnesse is my thankfulnesse, and I am every day fuller of that then before, to her L^{ap}. I say nothing to you of forein names in this Letter, because your son Sir *Francis* is here. For that which you write concerning your son, I onely gave my man *Martin* in charge, to use his interest in the Keeper, that your son should fall under no wants there, which it seems your son discharged, for I hear not of them. For other trifles, I bad my man let him have whatsoever he asked, so, as it might seem to come from him, and not me; and laying that look upon it, it came to almost nothing. Tell both your daughters a peece of a storie of my *Con.* which may accustome them to endure disappointments in this world: An honourable person (whose name I give you in a schedule to burn, lest this Letter should be mis-laid) had an intention to give her one of his sons, and had told it me, and would have been content to accept what I, by my friends, could have begged for her; but he intended that son to my Profession, and had provided him already 300^{l} a year, of his own gift in Church livings, and hath estated 300^{l} more of inheritance for their children: and now the youth, (who yet knows nothing of his fathers intention nor mine) flies from his resolutions for that Calling, and importunes his Father to let him travell. The girle knows not her losse, for I never told her of it: but truly, it is a great disappointment to me. More then these, Sir, we must all suffer, in our ways to heaven, where, I hope you and all yours shall meet

Your poor friend, and affectionate servant

J. Donne.

18 Octob.
1622.

LXII. To my much honoured friend S[r] T. Lucy.

SIR,

I Have scarce had at any time any thing so like news to write to you, as that I am at this Town; we came from *Spâ* with so much resolution of passing by *Holland*. But at *Ma*[*a*]*stricht* we found that the lownesse, and slacknesse of the River, would incommodate us so much, as we charged [changed] our whole gests, and came hither by Land. In the way at *Lo*[*u*]*vaine* we met the E[arl] of *Arondel*, to recompense the losse wee had of missing my L. *Chandis* [*Chandos*] and his company, who came to *Spâ* within a few hours after we came away. Sir *Ed. Conaway* [*Conway*], by occasion of his bodies indisposition, was gone home before: he told me he had some hope of you about *Bartholomewtide*: But because I half understood by a Letter from you, that you were determined upon the Countrie till *Michaelmas,* I am not so earnest in endevouring to prolong our stay in these parts, as otherwise I should. If I could joine with him in that hope of seeing you on this side the water; and if you should hold that purpose of comming at that time, I should repent extremely my laying of our journies; for (if we should by miracle hold any resolution) we should be in *England* about that time, so that I might misse you both here, and there. Sir, our greatest businesse is more in our power then the least, and we may be surer to meet in heaven then in any place upon earth; and whilst we are distant here, we may meet as often as we list in Gods presence, by soliciting in our prayers for one another. I received 4 Letters from you at *Spâ* by long circuits. In the last, one from my L[ord] *Dorset*: I, who had a conscience of mine own unworthinesse of any favour from him, could not chuse but present my thanks for the least. I do not therefore repent my forwardnesse in that office; and I beseech you not to repent your part therein. Since we came to this Town, there arrived an Extraordinary from *Spain*, with a reconfirmation of the D[uke] *d'Aumals* Pension, which is thereby 2400[l] a year, & he brings the title of Count, to *Rodrigo de Calderon*, who from a very low place, having grown to be Secretary to *Lerma*, is now Ambassador here, and in great opinion of wisdome: They say yet he goes to *Prague* with the Marquis *Spinola*, and the G[raf] *Buquoy*, to congratulate the Emperour; but we all conclude here, that persons of such quality, being great in matter

of Warre, are not sent for so small an emploiment: we beleeve certainly, that they deliberate a Warre, and that the reduction of *Aix* being not worthy this diligence, their intentions must be upon *Cleve*[*s*], for the new Town which the two Princes make by *Collen* [*Cologne*] despites them much. The Elector of *Ments* [*Maintz*] hath lately been here, upon pretence of comming in devotion to *Sichem*, and shortly the Electors of *Colein* [*Cologne*] and *Saxony* are to be here severally: all concurs to a disposition of such a Warre, and the *Landsgrave* of *Hasse* [*Hesse*] (who is as yet in the Union) is much solicited and caressed by this party, and I doubt, will prove a frail and corruptible man. I durst think confidently, that they will at least proceed so far towards a Warre, as to try how *France* will dispose it self in the businesse: for it is conceived that the D. of *Bovillon* [*Bouillon*] brought to our K[ing] good assurances from the Qu[een] Regent, that she would pursue all her husbands purposes in advancing the designes of those Princes who are in possession of *Cleve*[*s*], and in the Union. If she declare her self to do so, when they stirre, they are like to divert their purposes; but if she stand but neutrall (as it is likely, considering how Spanish the Court is at this time) I see not that the Princes of the Union are much likely to retard them. Sir, you see what unconcerning things I am fain to write of, lest I should write of myself, who am so little a history or tale, that I should not hold out to make a Letter long enough to send over a Sea to you; for I should dispatch my self in this one word that I am

Your affectionate servant and lover

J. Donne.

Aug. 16. *here.*

1622.

LXIII. To the honourable Knight Sir H. G.

SIR,

Since I received a Letter by your sonne, whom I have not yet had the honour to see, I had a Letter Pacquet from you by M^r^ *Roe*: To the former, I writ before: In this I have no other commandement from you, but to tell you, whether M^r^ *Vill*[*i*]*ers* have received from the K[ing] any additions of honour, or profit. Without doubt he hath yet none. He is here, practising for the Mask; of which, if I mis-remember not, I writ as much as you desire to know, in a Letter which seems not to have been come to you, when you writ. In the *Savoy* business, the King hath declared himself by an engagement, to assist him with 100000^l^ a year, if the Warre continue. But I beleeve, he must farm out your *Warwickshire* Benevolence for the paiment thereof. Upon the strength of this engagement, Sir *Rob. Rich* becomes confident in his hopes. If you stood in an equall disposition for the West, and onely forbore, by reason of M^r^ *Martins* silence, I wonder; for I think, I told you, that he was gone; and I saw in Sir *Tho. Lucies* hand, a Letter from him to you, which was likely to tell you as much. Since I came from Court, I have stirred very little: Now that the Court comes again to us, I may have something which you may be content to receive from

Your very affectionate servant

J. Donne.

18. Decemb.

LXIV. To my good friend Sr H. G.

Sir,

The Messenger who brought me your Letter presented me a just excuse, for I received them so late upon *Thursday* night, that I should have dispatched before I could begin; yet I have obeyed you drowsily, and coldly, as the night and my indisposition commanded: yet perchance those hinderances have done good, for so your Letters are the lesse curious, in which, men of much leasure may soon exceed, when they write of businesse, they having but a little. You mention two more letters then I send. The time was not too short for me to have written them, (for I had an whole night) but it was too short to work a beleefe in me, that you could think it fit to go two so divers ways to one end. I see not, (for I see not the reason) how those letters could well have concurred with these, nor how those would well have been drawn from them, in a businesse wholly relating to this house. I was not lazie in disobeying you, but (I thought) only thrifty, and your request of those was not absolute, but conditioned, if I had leasure. So though that condition hinder them not, since another doth (and you forethought that one might) I am not stubborn. The good Countesse spake somewhat of your desire of letters; but I am afraid she is not a proper Mediatrix to those persons, but I counsail in the dark. And therefore return to that, of which I have clear light, that I am always glad, when I have any way to expresse my love; for in these commandements you feed my desires, and you give me means to pay some of my debts to you: the interest of which I pay in all my prayers for you, which, if it please not God to shew here, I hope we shall finde again together in heaven, whither they were sent. I came this morning to say thus much, and because the Porter which came to *Micham* summoned me for this hour to *London*: from whence I am this minute returning to end a little course of Physick.

Yours very truly

J. Donne.

Friday 8 in the morning.

LXV. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Writ to you yesterday taking the boldnesse to put a letter into the good Ladies pacquet for you. This morning I had this new occasion of writing, that Sir *Tho. Roe*, who brought this inclosed Letter to me, and left it unsealed, intreated me to take the first opportunity of sending it. Besides that which is in that letter (for he read it to me) I came to the knowledg in *Yorkhouse* that my L[ord] Chancellor hath been moved, and incensed against you; and asking Sir *Tho. Roe*, if he were directly or occasionally any cause of that, he tells me thus much, that Sir *W. Lover*, and Sir *H. Carey*, have obtained of my L[ord], to have a Pursevant, and consequently a Sergeant sent into the Countrey for you. My L. grounds this earnestnesse against you, upon some refusing to appear upon processe which hath been taken out against you. And I perceive Sir. *Ed. Eston*, and both the other, admit consultations, of ways by petition to the King, or Counsail, or L[ord] Chamberlain, or any other. The great danger, obliquely likely to fall, is that when it comes to light, how you stand towards M. *Mathew*, you may lose the ease which you have by colour of that extent, and he may lose the benefit, of having had so much of his estate concealed. You will therefore at least pardon my advising you, to place those sums, which by your retiring I presume you do imploy upon payment of debts, in such places as that these particular friends be not forced to leave being so. I confesse, the going about to pay debts, hastens importunity. I finde in my self, that where I was not asked money before, yet when I offered to pay next Terme, they seem loth to afford me that time, which might justly have been desperate before: but that which you told me out of the Countrey, with the assistance which I hope to finde here, (especially if your indevour may advance it at *Dorset* house) I hope will inable me to escape clamor, and an ill conscience, in that behalf. One thing more I must tell you; but so softly, that I am loath to hear my self: and so softly, that if that good Lady were in the room, with you and this Letter, she might not hear. It is, that I am brought to a necessity of printing my Poems, and addressing them to my L. Chamberlain. This I mean to do forthwith; not for much publique view, but at mine own cost, a few Copies. I apprehend some incongruities in the resolution; and I know what I shall suffer from many interpretations: but I am at an end of much

considering that; and, if I were as startling in that kinde, as ever I was, yet in this particular, I am under an unescapable necessity, as I shall let you perceive, when I see you. By this occasion I am made a Rhapsoder of mine own rags, and that cost me more diligence, to seek them, then it did to make them. This made me aske to borrow that old book of you, which it will be too late to see, for that use, when I see you: for I must do this, as a valediction to the world, before I take Orders. But this is it, I am to aske you; whether you ever made any such use of the letter in verse, *A nostre Countesse chez vous*, as that I may not put it in, amongst the rest to persons of that rank; for I desire very very much, that something should bear her name in the book, and I would be just to my written words to my L[ord] *Harrington*, to write nothing after that. I pray tell me as soon as you can, if I be at liberty to insert that; for if you have by any occasion applied any pieces of it, I see not, that it will be discerned, when it appears in the whole piece. Though this be a little matter, I would be sorry not to have an account of it, within as little after Newyears tide, as you could. I have something else to say, of M. *Villars* [*Villiers*], but because I hope to see you here shortly, and because new additions, to the truths or rumours, which concern him, are likely to be made by occasion of this Masque, I forbear to send you the edition of this Mart, since I know it will be augmented by the next: of which, if you prevent it not by comming, you shall have by letter an account from

Your very affectionate
friend and servant
J. Donne.

Vigilia S^{t} *Tho.*
1614.

LXVI. To the worthy Knight Sir Tho. Lucy.

SIR,

Your letter comes to me, at Grace after supper; it is part of the prayer of that Grace, that God will blesse you, and all yours with his best blessings of both kinds. I would write you news; but your love to me, may make you apt to over-beleeve news for my sake. And truly all things that are upon the stage of the world now, are full of such uncertainties, as may justly make any man loth to passe a conjecture upon them; not only because it is hard to see how they will end, but because it is misintertable [*sic*] and dangerous to conjecture otherwise, then some men would have the event to be. That which is especially in my contemplation, which is the issue of my L[ord] of *Canterburies* businesse (for, thereupon depends the consecration of my predecessor, upon which the Deanery devolves to the King) is no farther proceeded in yet, then that some of the 10 Commissioners have met once; and upon Saterday next there will be a fuller meeting, and an entrance into the businesse, upon which, much, very much in consequence, depends. Of my L. of *Donc*[*aster*] we are only assured, that he is in a good way of convalescence; but of any audience nothing yet. Slacken not your hold of my L. Treasurer, for I have been told that you are in his care. I send you a Copy of that Sermon, but it is not my copy, which I thought my L. of *South-hampton* would have sent me backe. This you must be pleased to let me have again, for I borrow it: for the other, I will pretermit no time to write it; though in good faith, I have half forgot it. If in any letter I leave out the name of the La[dy] *Hunt*[*ington*] or La[dy] *Burdell*, or your daughters, tell them, that I named them. I take the falshood upon me; for I intend it very readily, and very humbly, where I am good for any thing in any of their services. Our blessed Saviour continue and enlarge his blessings to you all, *Amen*.

Your humble servant in Chr. Jes.

J. Donne.

11 Octob. 1621.

Why do you say nothing of, my little book of Cases.

LXVII. To Sir G. B.

Sir,

It is one of my blinde Meditations to think what a miserable defeat it would be to all these preparations of braverie, if my infirmity should overtake others: for, I am at least half blinde, my windows are all as full of glasses of Waters, as any Mountebanks stall. This messenger makes haste, I thank him for it; therefore I onely send you this Letter, which was sent to me about three daies past, and my promise to distribute your other Letters, according to your addresses, as fast as my Monsieur can doe it; for, for any personall service, you must be content, at this time, to pardon

Your affectionate servant

J. Donne.

Decemb. 23.

LXVIII. To Sir H. Goodere.

SIR,

Agreeably to my fortune, and thoughts, I was crawld this back way from *Keyston*; through my broken casement at *Bedford*, I saw, for my best dish at dinner, your Coach; I studied your gests, but when I knew where you were, I went out of this Town, in a doubt whether I should turn in to *Wrest*; and you know the wisdome of the Parliament is, to resolve ever in the Negative: Therefore it is likeliest I shall not come in there; yet, let me give you in passing, thus much account of my self: I thought to kisse my L[ord] *Spencers* hands, at one house, and have passed three. If you know nothing to the contrary, risen since I came from *London*, I am likely to have a room in my L. of Dov. train, into the Countrie; if I have, I do not ask, but use the leave of waiting upon you at home: There and ever elswhere, our blessed Saviour blesse you, and all yours in which number, I pray, account ever

Your very thankfull servant in Chr. Jes.

J. Donne.

LXIX. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Cannot obey you, if you go to morrow to *Parsons-green*; your company, that place, and my promise are strong inducements, but an Ague flouts them all, of which I have had two such threatenings, that I provide against it by a little Physick. This is one fetter; but I have a pair: for I attend Sir *Geo. Mores* answer in a little businesse, of which I can have no account till his return, so I am fastened here, till after *Sunday*. As you are sure that I love you thorowly, so think this a good expressing of that, that I promise now, that I will certainly goe with you on *Munday*, in despite of these interruptions, and serve you with my company to the *Bathe*; which journie, it is time to hasten. But I pray think this promise so much worth, that it may deserve your comming this way on *Munday*, for I make it with that reservation. God send you Hawks and fortunes of a high pitch.

Your honest affectionate
J. Donne.

LXX. To Sir T. R.

SIR,

I Have bespoke you a New-years-gift, that is, a good New year, for I have offered your name with my soul heartily to God in my mornings best Sacrifice: If for custome you will doe a particular office in recompense, deliver this Letter to your Lady, now, or when the rage of the Mask is past. If you make any haste into the Country, I pray let me know it. I would kisse your hands before you goe, which I doe now, and continue

Your affectionate servant
and lover
J. Donne.

Micham, *the last of* 1607.
as I remember.

LXXI. To Sir Henry Goodere.

Sir,

I Speak to you before God, I am so much affected with yesterdaies accident, that I think I prophane it in that name. As men which judge Nativities, consider not single Starres, but the Aspects, the concurrence and posture of them; so in this, though no particular past arrest me, or divert me, yet all seems remarkable and enormous. God, which hath done this immediately without so much as a sickness, will also immediately without supplement of friends, infuse his Spirit of comfort, where it is needed and deserved. I write this to you from the *Spring Garden*, whither I withdrew my self to think of this; and the intensenesse of my thinking ends in this, that by my help Gods work should be imperfected, if by any means I resisted the amasement.

Your very true friend

J. Donne.

LXXII. To my good friend G. H.

Sir,

The little businesse which you left in my hands is now dispatched; if it have hung longer then you thought, it might serve for just excuse, that these small things make as many steps to their end, and need as many motions for the warrant, as much writing of the Clerks, as long expectation of a Seal, as greater. It comes now to you sealed, and with it as strong and assured seals of my service and love to you, if it be good enough for you. I owe you a continuall tribute of Letters. But, Sir, even in Princes and Parents, and all States that have in them a naturall Soveraignty, there is a sort of reciprocation, and as [?] descent to doe some offices due to them that serve them: which makes me look for Letters from you, because I have another as valuable a pawn therefore, as your friendship, which is your promise; lest by the Jailors fault this Letter stick long, I must tell you, that I writ and sent it *12 Decemb. 1600.*

Your friend and servant and lover

J. Donne.

12. Decemb. 1600.

LXXIII. To your self.

SIR,

I Send you here a Translation; but it is not onely to beleeve me, it is a great invention to have understood any piece of this Book, whether the gravity of the matter, or the Poeticall form, give it his inclination, and *principium motus*; you are his center, or his spheare, and to you as to his proper place he addresses himself. Besides that all my things, not onely by obligation, but by custome, know that that is the way they should goe. I spake of this to my L[ady] of *Bedford*, thinking then I had had a copy which I made long since, at Sea, but because I finde it not, I have done that again: when you finde it not unseasonable, let her see it; and if you can think it fit, that a thing that hath either wearied, or distasted you, should receive so much favour, put it amongst her papers: when you have a new stomach to it, I will provide you quickly a new Copy.

Your very true friend and servant
and lover
J. Donne.

At my Micham
Hospitall, Aug. 10.

LXXIV. To the gallant Knight Sir Tho. Lucy.

SIR,

Because in your last Letter, I have an invitation to come to you, though I never thought my self so fallen from my interest, which, by your favour, I prescribe in, in you, and therefore when in the spring I hoped to have strength enough, to come into those parts, upon another occasion, I always resolved to put my self into your presence too, yet now I aske you more particularly how you dispose of your self; for though I have heard, that you purpose a journey to the *Bath*, and from thence hither, yet I can hope, that my service at *Lincolns Inne* being ended for next Terme, I may have intermission enough to waite upon you at *Polesworth*, before the season call you to *Bath*. I was no easie apprehender of the fear of your departing from us; neither am I easie in the hope of seeing you intirely over suddenly. God loves your soul if he be loth to let it go inch-meale, and not by swallowings; and he loves it too, if he build it up again stone after stone; his will is not done except his way, and his leasure be observed. In my particular, I am sorry, if my ingenuity and candor in delivering myself in those points, of which you speak to me, have defaced those impressions which were in you before: if my freedome have occasioned your captivity, I am miserably sorry. I went unprofitably and improvidently, to the utmost end of Truth, because I would go as farre as I could to meet Peace; if my going so far in declaring my self, brought you where you could not stop. But as I was as confident in your strength, as in mine own, so am I still, in him, who strengthens all our infirmities and will, I doubt not, bring you and me together, in all those particulars, so as we shall not part in this world, nor the next. Sir, your own soul cannot be more zealous of your peace, then I am: and God, who loves that zeale in me, will not suffer you to suspect it. I am surprised with a necessity of writing now, in a minute; for I sent to *Bedford* house to informe my self of means to write, and your daughter sent me word, of a present messenger, and therefore the rest of this I shall make up in my prayers to our blessed Saviour, for all happinesses to you.

Your poor servant in Chr. Jesus
J. Donne.

Drury house the 22 of
Decemb. 1607.

LXXV. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

This is a second Letter: the enclosed was written before. Now we are sure that *Heidelberge* is taken, and entred with extreme cruelties. Almost all the defendors forsook their stations; only Sir *Ger*[*ald*] *Herbert* maintained his nobly, to the repulsing of the enemy three times, but having ease in the other parts, 800 new fresh men were put upon his quarter, and after he had broke 4 Pikes, and done very well, he was shot dead in the place. *Man*[*n*]*heim* was soon after besieged, and is still. *Heydelth* [*Heidelberg*] was lost the 6 of this moneth; the K[ing] upon news of this, sent to the Spanish Ambassa[d]our, that the people were like to resent it, and therefore, if he doubted ought, he should have a Guard: but I do not see, that he seems to need it, in his own opinion neither in truth does he; the people are flat: or trust in God, and the Kings ways. Sir *Hor*[*atio*] *Vere* hath written to his wife, (as I am told) a Letter in the nature of a will, for the disposing of his estate and children, as though he did not account to see her any more, but yet *Man*[*n*]*heim* cannot be lost, but by storming. Your man stays, and our bell rings me into the Church; there Sir, I shall recommend you to Gods goodnesse, with

Your friend

J. Donne.

24 Septemb.

LXXVI. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Live so farre removed, that even the ill news of your great losse (which is ever swiftest and loudest) found me not till now; your letter speaks it not plain enough but I am so accustomed to the worst, that I am sure it is so in this. I am almost glad that I knew her so little: for I would have no more additions to sorrow; if I should comfort you, it were an almes acceptable in no other title, then when poor give to poor; for I am more needy of it then you. And I know you well provided of Christian, and learned, and brave defences against all humane accidents. I will make my best haste after your messenger: and if my self and the place had not been ill provided of horses, I had been the messenger, for you have taught me by granting more to deny no request.

Your honest unprofitable friend
J. Donne.

Pyesford 3 a clock
just as yours came.

LXXVII. To Sir G. H.

SIR

I Cannot yet serve you with those books of which your Letter spake. In recompense I will tell you a story, which if I had had leasure to have told it you when it was fresh, which was upon Thursday last, might have had some grace for the rareness, and would have tried your love to me, how farre you would adventure to beleeve an improbable thing for my sake who relates it. That day in the morning, there was some end made, by the E[arl] of *Salisbury* and others, who were Arbitrators in some differences between *Her*[*t*]*ford* and *Mounte*[*a*]*gle*. *Her*[*t*]*ford* was ill satisfied in it, and declared himself so farre as to say, he expected better usage in respect not only of his cause but of his expence and service in his Ambassage: to which *Salisbury* replied, that considered how things stood between his Majesty and *Her*[*t*]*ford* house at the Kings enterance, the King had done him especiall favour in that employment of honour and confidence, by declaring in so publique and great an act and testimony, that he had no ill affections toward him. *Her*[*t*]*ford* answered, that he was then and ever an honest man to the King: and *Salisbury* said, he denied not that, but yet solemnly repeated his first words again. So that *Her*[*t*]*ford* seemed not to make answer, but pursuing his own word, said, that whosoever denied him to have been an honest man to the King, lyed. *Salisbury* asked him if he directed that upon him, *Her*[*t*]*ford* said, upon any who denied this. The earnestnes of both was such, as *Salisbury* accepted it to himself, and made protestation before the LL. [Lords] present, that he would do nothing else, till he had honorably put off that lye. Within an hour after, *Salisbury* sent him a direct challenge, by his servant M^{r} *Knightley*; *Her*[*t*]*ford* required only an hours leisure of consideration (it is said, it was onely to inform himself of the especiall danger, in dealing so with a Counsellor) but he returned his acceptation: And all circumstances were so clearly handled between them, that St *James* was agreed for the place, and they were both come from their severall lodgings, and upon the way to have met, when they were interrupted by such as from the King were sent to have care of it. So these two have escaped this great danger; but (by my troth) I fear earnestly that Mistresse *Bolstrod* will not escape that sicknesse in which she labours at this time. I sent this morning to aske of her passage of this night; and the return is, that

she is as I left her yesternight, and then by the strength of her understanding, and voyce, (proportionally to her fashion, which was ever remisse) by the eavennesse and life of her pulse, and by her temper, I could allow her long life, and impute all her sicknesse to her minde. But the History of her sicknesse, makes me justly fear, that she will scarce last so long, as that you when you receive this letter, may do her any good office, in praying for her; for she hath not for many days received so much as a preserved Barber[r]y, but it returnes, and all accompanied with a Fever, the mother, and an extream ill spleen. Whilest I write this Tuesday morning, from *Bartlet* house one brings me a pacquet to your Master: he is gone; and that Lady and all the company is from town. I thought I might be pardoned, if I thought my self your man for that service to open it, which I did, and for the Letters I will deliver them. What else you bid *Foster* do in his Letter, bid him do it there, for (so God help me) I know not what it is. I must end now, else the carrier will be gone. God be with you.

Yours intirely.

You know me without a name, and I know not how this Letter goes.

LXXVIII. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Had destined all this Tuesday, for the Court, because it is both a Sermon day, and the first day of the Kings being here. Before I was to go forth, I had made up this inclosed pacquet for you, and then came this messenger with your pacquet, of which if you can remember the number, you cannot expect any account thereof from me, who have not half an hour left me before I go forth, and your messenger speakes of a necessity of returning homward before my returning home. If upon the delivery of them, or any other occasion, there intervene new subject of writing, I shall relieve my self upon Tuesday, if *Tamworth* carrier be in town. To the particulars of the Letter to my self, I will give this paper, and line. Of my Lady *Badford*, I must say so much as must importune you to burn the Letter; for I would say nothing of her upon record, that should not testifie my thankfulnesse for all her graces. But upon this motion which I made to her by letter, and by S^r^ *Tho. Roes* assistance, if any scruple should arise in her, she was somewhat more startling, then I looked for from her: she had more suspicion of my calling, a better memory of my past life, then I had thought her nobility could have admitted: of all which, though I humbly thank God, I can make good use, as one that needs as many remembrances in that kinde, as not only friends but enemies can present, yet I am afraid, they proceed in her rather from some ill impression taken from D[octor] *Burges*, then that they grow in her self. But whosoever be the conduit, the water is the holy Ghosts, and in that acceptation I take it. For her other way of expressing her favour to me, I must say, it is not with that cheerfulnesse, as heretofore she hath delivered her self towards me. I am almost sorry, that an Elegy should have been able to move her to so much compassion heretofore, as to offer to pay my debts; and my greater wants now, and for so good a purpose, as to come disengaged into that profession, being plainly laid open to her, should work no farther but that she sent me 30*l.* which in good faith she excused with that, which is in both parts true, that her present debts were burdensome, and that I could not doubt of her inclination, upon all future emergent occasions, to assist me. I confesse to you, her former fashion towards me, had given a better confidence; and this diminution in her makes me see, that I must use more friends, then I thought I should have

needed. I would you could burn this letter, before you read it, at least do when you have read it. For, I am afraid out of a Contemplation of mine own unworthinesse, and fortune, that the example of this Lady, should work upon the Lady where you are: for though goodnesse be originally in her, and she do good, for the deeds sake, yet, perchance, she may think it a little wisdome, to make such measure of me, as they who know no better, do. Of any new treaty of a match with *Spain*, I hear nothing. The warres in the *Low countries*, to judge by their present state, are very likely to go forward. No word of a Parliament, and I my self have heard words of the K[ing] as directly against any such purpose, as any can sound. I never heard word, till in your letter, of any stirres in *Scotland*, for that of the French K. which you aske, it hath this good ground, That in the Assembly there a proposition hath been made, and well entertained, that the K[ing] should be declared, to have full Jurisdiction in *France*; and no other person to have any. It hath much of the modell and frame of our Oath of Allegeance, but with some modification. It is true, it goes farther then that State hath drove in any publique declarations, but not farther than their Schools have drove often and constantly: the easinesse that it hath found in passing thus farre without opposition, puts (perchance unnecessarily) in me a doubt, that they are sure to choak it, at the Royall assent, and therefore oppose it not, by the way, to sweeten the conveyance of their other purposes. Sir, if I stay longer I shall lose the Text, at Court, therefore I kisse your hand, and rest

Your very true servant

J. Donne.

We hear (*but without second as yet*) *that Sir* Rich[ard] *Philips brother in* France, *hath taken the habit of a Capuchin*.

LXXIX. To Sir Thomas Lucy.

SIR,

This first of *Aprill* I received yours of 21 of *Martii*, which being two days after the ordinary *Smithfield* day, I could do no more, but seal this letter to be sent to you next Tuesday, because I foresee that I shall not then be in town. Whatsoever I should write now, of any passages of these days, would lose the verdure before the letter came to you, only give me leave to tell you that I need none of those excuses, which you have made to your self in my behalfe, for my not writing. For your son in law came to me, so near the time of his going away, as it had been impossible to have recovered him with a letter at so farre a distance, as he was lodged. And my L. *Hunt.* messenger received that answer, which, I hope, before this time, you know to be true, that I had sent the day before, by the infallible carrier of *Smithfield*. The Emperours death may somewhat shorten our way; for I discern now no reason of going to *Vienna*; but I beleeve it wil exte˜d our busines; so that I promise my self no speedier return by that. If I write no letters into *England* out of these parts, I cannot be without your pardon, if I write not to you, but if I write to any and leave you out, lay all the faults which you have ever pardoned in me, to my charge again. I foresee some reasons, which may make me forbeare; but no slacknesse of mine own, shall. Sir, if I have no more the commodity of writing to you here in *England*, (as, we may be gon before next Tuesday) I tell you, in this departing from you, with the same truth and earnestnesse as I would be beleeved to speake in my last departing, and transmigration from the whole world, that I leave not behinde me a heart, better affected to you, nor more devoted to your service, then I carry with me. Almighty God blesse you, with such a reparation in your health, such an establishment in your estate, such a comfort in your children, such a peace in your conscience, and such a true cheerfulnesse in your heart, as may be strong seales to you, of his eternall gracious purpose upon you. This morning I spend in surveying and emptying my Cabinet of Letters; and at the top of all I light upon this Letter lately received, which I was loth to bury. I chose to send it you, to mine own condemnation; because a man so busie as he is, descending to this expressing of himself in verse, I am inexcusable towards you, for disobeying a commandment of yours, of that kinde; but I relie upon the

generall, that I am sure you are sure, that I never refuse any thing for lazinesse, nor morosity, and therefore make some other excuse for me. You have been so long used to my hand that I stand not to excuse the hasty raggednesse of this Letter. The very ilnesse of the writing, is a good argument that I forced a time, in the fulnesse of businesse, to kisse your hand, and to present my thanks as for all your favours, and benefits, so principally for keeping me alive in the memory of the noblest Countesse, whose commandement, if it had been her L^{aps} pleasure to have any thing said or done in her service, at *Heydelberg*, I should have been glad to have received. Sir, God blesse you, *& spiritu principali confirmet te*; and

Your very true and affectionate servant in Chr. Jes.

J. Donne.

LXXX. To the honourable Knight Sr Henry Goodere.

SIR,

As you are a great part of my businesse, when I come to *London*, so are you when I send. More then the office of a visitation brings this Letter to you now; for I remember that about this time you purposed a journey to fetch, or meet the Lad[y] *Huntington*. If you justly doubt any long absence, I pray send to my lodging my written Books: and if you may stay very long, I pray send that Letter in which I sent you certain heads which I purposed to enlarge, for I have them not in any other paper: and I may finde time in your absence to do it, because I know no stronger argument to move you to love me, but because you have done so, doe so still, to make my reason better, and I shall at last prescribe in you

Yours,

J. Donne.

Micham Wednesday.

LXXXI. To Sir H. G. at Polesworth.

SIR,

This 25 I have your letter of 21, which I tell you so punctually, because by it, nor by any other, I doe not discern that you received my pacquet of Books; not that I looked for so quick a return of the Sermon, nor of my Cases of conscience, but that I forget so absolutely what I write, and am so sure that I write confidently to you, that it is some pain to remain in any jealousie that any Letter is miscarried. That which I writ to you of my L. Treasur[er's] disposition to you, I had from M^{r} *Har*[*ington*]; and I understood it to be his desire to convey it through me. The last account which we have of my L. *Donc*[*aster*] is, by Letters of the 2^{o} of this; by which also we saw, that the first Letters of his convalescence, were but propheticall; for he was let blood a second time, and is not strong enough yet to receive audience. Though I be not Dean of *Pauls* yet, my L[ord] of *Warwick* hath gone so low, as to command of me the office of being Master of my game, in our wood about him in *Essex*. I pray be you content to be my officer too, the Steward of my services to all to whom you know them to be due in your walk, and continue your own assurance that I am

Your affectionate servant in Chr. Jes.

J. Donne.

LXXXII. To my worthy friend F. H.

SIR,

I Can scarce doe any more this week then send you word why I writ not last. I had then seposed a few daies for my preparation to the Communion of our B[lessed] Saviours body; and in that solitarinesse and arraignment of my self, digested some meditations of mine, and apparelled them (as I use) in the form of a Sermon: for since I have not yet utterly delivered my self from this intemperance of scribling (though I thank God my accesses are lesse and lesse vehement) I make account that to spend all my little stock of knowledge upon matter of delight, were the same error, as to spend a fortune upon Masks and Banqueting houses: I chose rather to build in this poor fashion, some Spittles, and Hospitals, where the poor and impotent sinner may finde some relief, or at least understanding of his infirmity. And if they be too weak to serve posterity, yet for the present by contemplation of them, &c.

LXXXIII. To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Have the honour of your Letter, which I am almost sorry to have received: some few daies before the receit thereof D[octor] *Turner*, who accompanied my L. *Carow* [*Carey*] to *Sion* to dinner, shewed me a Letter from you, from which I conceived good hopes that your businesses, being devolved into the hands of the Treasurer, had been in much more forwardnesse, then by your Letter to me they appear to be. I beseech God establish them, and hasten them, and with them, or without them, as he sees most conducible to his purpose upon you, continue in you a relying upon him, and a satisfaction in his waies. I know not whether any Letter from your son, or any other report, may have given you any mention of me; he writ to me from the *Compter*, that he was under a trifling arrest, and that 3^{l} and some little more would discharge him. I sent my man with that money, but bid him see it emploied for his discharge: he found more actions, and returned. Next day he writ to me that 8^{l} would discharge him, and that M^{r} *Selden* would lay down half. But M^{r} *Selden* and I speaking together, thought it the fittest way, to respite all, till, in a few daies, by his writing to you, we might be directed therein; and in the mean time, took order with the Keeper to accommodate him, and I bade my man *Martin*, as from himself, to serve his present want with some things. Since we told him, that we would attend a return of his Letter to you, I heard no more of him, but I hear he is out. Whosoever serves you with relations from this Town, I am sure prevents me of all I can say. The Palatinate is absolutely lost; for before this Letter come to you, we make account that *Heydelberg* and *Frankindale* is lost, and *Manheme* [*Mannheim*] distressed, *Mansfield* came to *Breda*, and *Gonzales* to *Brussels*, with great losses on both sides, but equall. The P[rince] of *Orange* is but now come to *Breda*, and with him, all that he is able to make, even out of the Garrisons of their Towns. The ways of victuall to *Spinolaes* Army, are almost all precluded by him, and he likely to put upon the raising of *Spinola*, between whom and the Town, there are hotter disputes, then ever our times saw. The Secretary of the States here shewed me a Letter yesternight, that the Town spends 6000 pound of powder a day, and hath spent since the siege 250^{m} pounds. *Argits* Regiment and my L. *Vaux*, are so diminished by commings away, as that both (I think) make not now in

Muster above 600. M^r^ *Gage* is returning to *Rome*, but of this Negotiation I dare say nothing by a Letter of adventure. The direction which his Ma^ty^ gave for Preachers, had scandalized many; therefore he descended to pursue them with certain reasons of his proceedings therein; and I had commandment to publish them in a Sermon at the Crosse, to as great a Congregation as ever I saw together, where they received comfortable assurance of his Ma^ties^ constancy in Religion, and of his desire that all men should be bred in the knowledge of such things, as might preserve them from the superstition of *Rome*. I presume it is but a little while before we shall see you here, but that little time is likely to produce many things greatly considerable. Present, I pray, my thankfull services to your good daughters. I can give them no better a room in my prayers, and wishes, then my poore *Constance* hath, and they have that; so have you Sir, with

J. Donne.

LXXXIV. To the worthiest Knight Sir Henry Goodere.

SIR,

Our blessed Saviour, who abounds in power and goodnesse towards us all, blesse you, and your family, with blessings proportioned to his ends in you all, and blesse you with the testimony of a rectified conscience, of having discharged all the offices of a father, towards your discreet and worthy daughters, and blesse them with a satisfaction, and quiescence, and more, with a complacency and a joy, in good ends, and ways towards them, *Amen*. Your man brought me your Letter of the 8 of *December* this 21 of the same, to *Chelsey*, and gives me the largenesse till friday to send a letter to *Pauls* house. There can scarce be any peece of that, or of those things whereof you require light from me, that is not come to your knowledge, by some clearer way, between the time of your Letter, and this. Besides the report of my death hath thus much of truth in it, that though I be not dead, yet I am buried. Within a few weeks after I immured my self in this house, the infection strook into the town, into so many houses, as that it became ill manners to make any visits. Therefore I never went to *Knoll*, nor *Hanworth*, nor *Kenton* [*Keyston*], nor to the Court, since the Court came into these quarters, nor am yet come to *London*; therefore I am little able to give you account of high stages. Perchance you look not so low, as our ordinary Gazetta, and that tells us, (with a second assurance) that the D[uke] of *Brunswick*, *Christian*, is dead of an Ague. My L[ord] of *Dorset* even upon the day, when he should have been installed with his six fellowes, fell sick at *London*; and at Court (which does not exalt all men) his Fever was exalted to the plague; but he is in good convalescence. Of the Navy I hear of no great lim[b] come back yet, but my L. of *Essex*; something of the disappointing of the designe they had, is imputed to some difference, in point of command, betweem him and the M^{r} of the Ordinance, my L. of *Valencia*, but as yet there is little manifested. Already is issued a Proclamation, that there be no disbanding of the Souldiers, upon their landing, in what part soever, and that his Majesty hath present imployment for them. What the business at *Haghe* [*Hague*] hath been, I know nothing, but I hear, that their offer of pawning of Jewells to a very very great value, to the States or private men, hath found no acceptance, at least found no money. Occasionally I heard from the *Haghe*, that the Queen having taken

into her care, the promoving and advancing of some particular mens businesses, by way of recommendations to the Duke, expressed her self very royally, in your behalf. This I tell you not, as though you knew it not, but because I had the fortune to see it in a Letter of the simple Gentlewoman, from thence; by which name, if you know her not, I have omitted heretofore to tell you a good tale. They continue at Court, in the resolution of the Queen pastorall; when *Q*[*ueen*] *Anne* loved gamboils, you loved the Court; perchance you may doubt whether you be a thorough Courtier, if you come not up to see this, The Queen a Shepperdesse; but I speak not this, by way of counsail, to draw you up, it is not only *Non Dominus, sed ego*, but *nec Deus nec ego*, to call you hither, but upon fair appearances of usefull commings. M[r] *George Herbert* is here at the receipt of your letter, and with his service to you, tells you that all of *Uvedall* house are well. I reserve not the mention of my Lady *Huntington* to the end of my Letter, as grains to make the gold weight, but as tincture to make the better gold, when you finde room to intrude so poor and impertinent a name, as mine is, in her presence. I beseech you, let her Lad[yship] know, that she hath sowed her favours towards me, in such a ground, that if I be grown better (as I hope I am) her favours are grown with me, and though they were great when she conferred them, yet, (if I mend every day) they increase in me every day, and therefore every day multiply my thankfulnesse towards her Ladiship: say what you will (if you like not this expression) that may make her Ladiship know, that I shall never let fall the memory, nor the just valuation of her noble favours to me, nor leave them unrequited in my Exchequer, which is, the blessings of God upon my prayers. If I should write another sheet, I should be able to serve your curiosity no more of Dukes nor LL. [Lords] nor Courts, and this half line serves to tell you, that I am truly

Your poor friend and humble servant in Chr. Jes.
J. Donne.

LXXXV. To my honoured friend G. G. Esquire.

SIR,

Neither your Letters, nor silence, needs excuse; your friendship is to me an abundant possession, though you remember me but twice in a year: He that could have two harvests in that time, might justly value his land at a high rate; but, Sir, as we doe not onely then thank our land, when we gather the fruit, but acknowledge that all the year she doth many motherly offices in preparing it: so is not friendship then onely to be esteemed, when she is delivered of a Letter, or any other reall office, but in her continuall propensnesse and inclination to do it. This hath made me easie in pardoning my long silences, and in promising my self your forgivenesse for not answering your Letter sooner. For my purpose of proceeding in the profession of the law, so farre as to a title you may be pleased to correct that imagination, wheresoever you finde it. I ever thought the study of it my best entertainment, and pastime, but I have no ambition, nor designe upon the style. Of my Anniversaries, the fault that I acknowledge in my self, is to have descended to print any thing in verse, which though it have excuse even in our times, by men who professe, and practise much gravitie, yet I confesse I wonder how I declined to it, and do not pardon my self. But for the other part of the imputation of having said too much, my defe˜ce is, that my purpose was to say as well as I could: for since I never saw the Gentlewoman, I cannot be understood to have bound my self to have spoken just truths, but I would not be thought to have gone about to praise her, or any other in rime, except I took such a person, as might be capable of all that I could say. If any of those Ladies think that Mistris *Drewry* was not so, let that Lady make her self fit for all those praises in the book, and they shall be hers. Sir, this messenger makes so much haste that I cry you mercy for spending any time of this letter in other imployment then thanking you for yours. I hope before *Christmas* to see *England*, and kisse your hand, which shall ever, (if it disdain not that office) hold all the keyes of the liberties and affection, and all the faculties of

Your most affectionate servant,

J. D.

Paris the 14 of
Aprill, here, 1612.

LXXXVI. To my honoured friend G. G. Esquire.

SIR,

I Should not only send you an account by my servant, but bring you an account often my self, (for our Letters are our selves and in them absent friends meet) how I do, but that two things make me forbear that writing: first, because it is not for my gravity, to write of feathers, and strawes, and in good faith, I am no more, considered in my body, or fortune. And then because whensoever I tell you how I doe, by a Letter, before that Letter comes to you, I shall be otherwise, then when it left me. At this time, I humbly thank God, I am only not worse; for I should as soon look for Roses at this time of the year, as look for increase of strength. And if I be no worse all spring, then now, I am much better, for I make account that those Church services, which I would be very loth to decline, will spend somewhat; and, if I can gather so much as will bear my charges, recover so much strength at *London*, as I shall spend at *London*, I shall not be loth to be left in that state wherein I am now, after that's done; But I do but discourse, I do not wish; life or health, or strength, (I thank God) enter not into my prayers for my self; for others they do; and amongst others, for your sick servant, for such a servant taken so young, and healed so long, is half a child to a master, and so truly I have observed that you have bred him with the care of a father. Our blessed Saviour look graciously upon him, and glorifie himself in him, by his way of restitution to health; And by his way of peace of conscience in

Your very true friend and servant in Chr. Jes.
J. Donne.

LXXXVII. SIR,

This advantage you, and my other friends, have by my frequent Fevers, that I am so much the oftener at the gates of heaven, and this advantage by the solitude and close imprisonment that they reduce me to after, that I am thereby the oftener at my prayers; in which, I shall never leave out your happinesse; and, I doubt not, but amongst his many other blessings, God will adde to you some one for my prayers. A man would almost be content to dye, (if there were no other benefit in death) to hear of so much sorrow, and so much good testimony from good men, as I, (God be blessed for it) did upon the report of my death. Yet, I perceive it went not through all; for, one writ unto me, that some (and he said of my friends) conceived, that I was not so ill, as I pretended, but withdrew my self, to save charges, and to live at ease, discharged of preaching. It is an unfriendly, and God knows, an ill grounded interpretation: for in these times of necessity, and multitudes of poor there is no possibility of saving to him that hath any tendernesse in him; and for affecting my ease, I have been always more sorry, when I could not preach, then any could be, that they could not hear me. It hath been my desire, (and God may be pleased to grant it me) that I might die in the Pulpit; if not that, yet that I might take my death in the Pulpit, that is, die the sooner by occasion of my former labours. I thanke you, for keeping our *George* in [in] your memory. I hope God reserves it for so good a friend as you are, to send me the first good news of him. For the Diamond Lady, you may safely deliver *Roper* whatsoever belongs to me, and he will give you a discharge for the money. For my L[ord] *Percy*, we shall speake of it, when we meet at *London*; which, as I do not much hope before Christmas, so I do not much fear at beginning of Tearm; for I have intreated one of my fellowes to preach to my Lord Maior, at *Pauls* upon Christmas day, and reserved Candlemas day to my self for that service, about which time also will fall my Lent Sermon, except my Lord Chamberlaine beleeve me to be dead, and leave me out; for as long as I live, and am not speechlesse, I would not decline that service. I have better leasure to write, then you to read, yet I will not oppress you with too much letter. God blesse you, and your sonne, as

Your poor friend and humble servant
in Christ Jesus

J. Donne.

LXXXVIII. To the Lady G.

Madam,

I Am not come out of *England*, if I remain in the Noblest part of it, your minde; yet I confesse, it is too much diminution to call your minde any part of *England*, or of this world, since every part even of your body deserves titles of higher dignity. No Prince would be loth to die, that were assured of so faire a tombe to preserve his memory: but I have a greater vantage then so; for since there is a Religion in friendship, and a death in absence, to make up an intire frame there must be a heaven too: and there can be no heaven so proportionall to that Religion, and that death, as your favour. And I am gladder that it is a heaven, then that it were a Court, or any other high place of this world, because I am likelier to have a room there then here; and better cheap. Madam, my best treasure is time; and my best imployment of that is to study good wishes for you, in which I am by continuall meditation so learned, that your own good Angell, when it would do you most good, might be content to come and take instructions from

Your humble and affectionate servant

J. Donne.

LXXXIX. To your selfe.

Sir,

The first of this moneth I received a Letter from you; no Letter comes so late, but that it brings fresh newes hither. Though I presume Mr *Pore* [*Pory*], and since, Sir *Rob. Rich* came after the writing of that Letter, yet it was good newes to me, that you thought me worthy of so good a testimony. And you were subtile in the disguise: for you shut up your Letter, thus, *Lond.* 22. in our stile, but I am not so good a Cabalist, as to finde in what moneth it was written. But, Sir, in the offices of so spirituall a thing as friendship, so momentary a thing as time, must have no consideration. I keep it therefore to read every day, as newly written: to which vexation it must be subject, till you relieve it with an other. If I ought you not a great many thankes for every particular part of it, I should yet thanke you for the length; and love it, as my mistresses face, every line and feature, but best all together. All that I can do towards retribution, is, (as other bankrupts do in prison) to make means by Commissioners, that a great debt may be accepted by small summes weekly. And in that proportion I have paid my tribute to you, almost ever since I came; and shall still do so. You know that they say, those are the strongest, and the firmest, and most precious things, which are composed of the most, and smallest parts. I will flatter my self therefore, that the number of my Letters may at last make a strong argument of my desire to serve you, but because I remember, out of this Philosophy, that they should be little, as well as many, lest this Letter should not get into the building, it shall be no bigger; thus much addition will not much disfigure it, that it sweare to you that I am

Your affectionate servant

J. Donne.

Sir, I cry you mercy for sealing your sisters letter, but I deliver you up my authority, and I remember you, that you have hers to open it again. You will the easilier forgive me, that I write no newes, when you observe by this transgression, that I live in a place which hath quenched in me even the remembrances of good manners. By naming her, I have made my postscript the worthyest place of my letter: and therefore I chuse that place to present my service to all the company at our lodging; in which house, if I cannot get

room for a pallat, at my return, my comfort is, that I can ever hope to be so near them as the Spittle in the Savoy, *where they receive Travellers.*

XC. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

Though I have left my bed, I have not left my bed-side; I sit there still, and as a Prisoner discharged sits at the Prison doore, to beg Fees, so sit I here, to gather crummes. I have used this leisure, to put the meditations had in my sicknesse, into some such order, as may minister some holy delight. They arise to so many sheetes (perchance 20.) as that without saying for that furniture of an Epistle, That my Friends importun'd me to Print them, I importune my Friends to receive them Printed. That, being in hand, through this long Trunke, that reaches from Saint *Pauls*, to Saint *James*, I whisper into your earre this question, whether there be any uncomlinesse, or unseasonablenesse, in presenting matter of Devotion, or Mortification, to that Prince, whom I pray God nothing may ever Mortifie, but Holinesse. If you allow my purposes in generall, I pray cast your eye upon the Title and the Epistle, and rectifie me in them: I submit substance, and circumstance to you, and the poore Author of both,

Your very humble and very thankfull
Servant
in Christ Jesus
J. Donne.

XCI. To your selfe.

Sir,

Age becomes nothing better then Friendship; therefore your Letters, which are ever good effects of friendship, delight to be old before I receive them: for it is but a fortnight since those Letters which you sent by Captain *Peter* found me at *Spâ*; presently upon the receit, I adventured by your leave to bestow the first minutes upon this Letter to your faire Noble Sister; And because I found no voice at *Spâ* of any Messenger, I respited my Writing to you, till I came thus much nearer. Upon the way hither, another Letter from you overtooke me, which by my L[ord] *Chandos* love to me for your sake, was sent after me to *Ma*[*a*]*stricht*: He came to *Spâ* within two houres after I went away; which I tell you to let you see, that my Fortune hath still that spitefull constancy, to bring me near my desires, and intercept me. If I should write to you any newes from this place, I should forestall mine owne Market, by telling you before hand that which must make me acceptable to you at my comming. I shall sneake into *London*, about the end of *August*. In my remotest distances I did not more need your Letters than I shall then. Therefore if you shall not be then in *London*, I beseech you to think mee at *Constantinople*, and write one large Letter to be left at my Ladie *Bartlets*, my lodging; for I shall come in extreame darknesse and ignorance, except you give me light. If Sir *John Brooke* be within your reach, present my humble service and thankfulnesse to him; if he be not, I am glad, that to my Conscience, which is a thousand witnesses, I have added you for one more, that I came as near as I could to doe it. I shall run so fast from this place, through *Antwerpe*, and some parts of *Holland*, that all that love which you could perchance be content to expresse by Letters if I lay still, may be more thriftily bestowed upon that one Letter, which is by your favour, to meet me, and to welcome to *London*

Your unworthy, but very
true Friend,
J. Donne.

XCII. Sir,

It is one ill affection of a desperate debtor, that he dares not come to an account, nor take knowledge how much he owes; this makes me that I dare not tell you how manie letters I have received from you since I came to this Towne; I had three the first by the Cooke, who brought none but yours, nor ever came to me, to let me know what became of the rest: the two other of the 7. and 8. of *March*, came in a letter which Sir *H. Wotton* writ to me from *Amyens*; there is not a size of paper in the Palace, large enough to tell you how much I esteeme my selfe honoured in your remembrances; nor strong enough to wrap up a heart so ful of good affections towards you, as mine is. When any thing passes between Sir *Thomas Roe* and you, tell him I am not the lesse his Servant, for not saying so by often letters: for by my troth, I am that so much as he could desire I should be, when he began to love me. Sir *Thomas Lucies* businesse, and perchance sadnesse forbid me writing now. I have written to him (whilest I lived in darknesse, whether my Letters came to you or no) by another way; and if my poore Letters were any degree of service, I should doe it often, and rather be mine own Post then leave any thing undone, to which he would give such an interpretation, as that it were an Argument of my Devotion to him. For my purpose of proceeding in the profession of the Law, so far as to a Title, you may be pleased to correct that imagination where you finde it. I ever thought the study of it my best entertainment and pastime, but I have no ambition, nor design upon the Stile. Of my Anniversaries the fault which I acknowledge in my selfe is to have descended to print any thing in Verse, which though it have excuse, even in our times, by example of men which one would thinke should as little have done it, as I; yet I confesse I wonder how I declined to it, and doe not pardon my self. But for the other part of the imputation, of having said so much, my defence is, that my purpose was to say as well as I could: for since I never saw the Gentlewoman, I cannot be understood to have bound my selfe to have spoken just Truth: but I would not be thought to have gone about to praise any bodie in rime, except I tooke such a Person, as might be capable of all that I could say. If any of those Ladies think that Mistris *Drury* was not so, let that Ladie make her selfe fit for all those praises in the Booke, and it shall be hers. Nothing is farther from colour or ground of Truth, then that which you write of Sir *Robert Druries* going to Masse. No

man of our Nation hath been more forward to apply himselfe to the Church of the Religion where he hath come, nor to relieve their wants, where that Demonstration hath beene needfull. I know not yet whether Sir *John Brookes* purpose of being very shortly here, be not a just reason to make me forbear writing to him. I am sure that I would fainest do that in writing or abstaining which should be most acceptable to him. It were in vain to put into this letter any relation of the Magnificence which have been here at publication of these marriages; for at this time there come into *England* so many *Frenchmen*, as I am sure you shall heare all at least. If they speak not of above eight hundred horse well caparosond, you may believe it: and you may believe, that no Court in Christendome had beene able to have appeared so brave in that kinde. But if they tell you of any other stuffe then Copper, or any other exercise of armes then running at the Quintain, and the Ring, you may be bold to say *Pardone moy*. Sir, this messenger makes so much haste that I cry you mercy for spending any time of this Letter, in other imployment, then thanking you for yours, and promising you more before my remove from hence. I pray venture no Letter to me by any other way then M. *John Bruer* [*Brewer*] at the Queens Armes a Mercer in *Cheapside*, who is always like to know where we are; And make me by loving me still, worthy to be

Your friend and servant

J. Donne.

XCIII. To my Honoured friend M^r^ George Gerrard.

Sir,

I Cannot chuse but make it a presage that I shall have no good fortune in *England*, that I mist the honour of enjoying that company, which you brought to town. But I beseech you let my ill luck determine in that ominousnesse: for if my not comming should be by her or you interpreted for a negligence or coldnesse in me, I were already in actual and present affliction. For that Ecclesiasticall Lady of whom you write, since I presume it is a work of darknesse that you go about, we will deferre it for winter. Perchance the cold weather, may be as good physique to you, as she, for quenching you. I have changed my purpose of going to *Windsor*, and will go directly into the Wight: which I tell you not as a concerning thing, but in obedience to your commandment, as one poor testimony that I am

Your affectionate servant

J. Donne.

XCIV. To my very worthy friend Mr George Gerrard.

Sir,

This is the fourth of this moneth, and I receive your Pacquet so late, that I have scarce waking time enough to tell you so, or to write any thing but dreams. I have both your Letters, mother and daughter, and am gladder of them, then if I had the mother and daughter here in our neighbourhood; you know I mean Sir *H. Goodere*s parties. Sir, you do me double honour when my name passes through you to that Noble Lady in whose presence you are. It is a better end and a better way to that then I am worth. I can give you nothing in recompense of that favour, but good counsell: which is to speake sparingly of any ability in me, lest you indanger your own reputation, by overvaluing me. If I shall at any time take courage by your Letter, to expresse my meditations of that Lady in writing, I shall scarce think lesse time to be due to that employment, then to be all my life in making those verses, and so take them with me and sing them amongst her fellow Angels in Heaven. I should be loath that in any thing of mine, composed of her, she should not appear much better then some of those of whom I have written. And yet I cannot hope for better expressings then I have given of them. So you see how much I should wrong her, by making her but equall to others. I would I could be beleeved, when I say that all that is written of them, is but prophecy of her. I must use your favour in getting her pardon, for having brought her into so narrow, and low-roost a room as my consideration, or for adventuring to give any estimation of her, and when I see how much she can pardon, I shall the better discern how far farther I may dare to offend in that kinde. My noble neighbour is well, and makes me the steward of his service to you. Before this Letter reaches you, I presume you will bee gathering towards these parts, and then all newes will meet you so fast, as that out of your abundance you will impart some to

Your affectionate friend to
serve you
J. Donne.

XCV. To your selfe.

Sir,

All your other Letters, which came to me by more hazardous waies, had therefore much merit in them; but for your Letter by M. *Pory*, it was but a little degree of favour, because the messenger was so obvious, and so certain, that you could not chuse but write by him. But since he brought me as much Letter as all the rest, I must accept that, as well as the rest. By this time, M. *Garret*, when you know in your conscience that you have sent no Letter, you beginne to look upon the superscription, and doubt that you have broken up some other bodies Letter: but whose so ever it were it must speak the same language, for I have heard from no body. Sir, if there be a Proclamation in *England* against writing to me, yet since it is thereby become a matter of State, you might have told M. *Pory* so. And you might have told him, what became of Sir *Tho. Lucies* Letter, in my first pacquet, (for any Letter to him makes any paper a pacquet, and any peece of single money a Medall) and what became of my Lady *Kingsmels* in my second, and of hers in my third, whom I will not name to you in hope that it is perished, and you lost the honour of giving it. Sir, mine own desire of being your servant, hath sealed me a Patent of that place during my life, and therefore it shall not be in the power of your forbidding, (to which your stiffe silence amounts) to make me leave being

Your very affectionate servant

J. Donne.

XCVI. To my Honoured friend M. George Garrat.

Sir,

I Would I were so good an Alchimist to perswade you that all the vertue of the best affections, that one could expresse in a sheet, were in this ragge of paper. It becomes my fortune to deale thus in single money; and I may hit better with this hail-shot of little Letters (because they may come thick) then with great bullets; and trouble my friends lesse. I confesse it were not long enough if it came to present my thankes for all the favours you have done me; but since it comes to begge more, perchance it may be long enough, because I know not how short you will be with an absent friend. If you will but write that you give me leave to keep that name still, it shall be the gold of your Letter: and for allay, put in as much newes as you will. We are in a place where scarce any money appeares, but base: as, I confesse, all matters of Letters is in respect of the testimonies of friendship; but obey the corruption of this place, and fill your Letters with worse stuffe then your own. Present my service to all those Gentlemen whom I had the honour to serve at our lodging; I cannot flie an higher pitch, then to say, that I am so much their servants as you can say I am. At the Queens armes in *Cheapside*, which is a Mercers, you may hear of one M. *John Brewer*, who will convey any Letter directed to me at Sir *Rob. Druries* at *Amiens*, though he know not me: and I should be glad to hear that this first that I sent into *England* had the fortune to finde you.

Yours

J. Donne.

XCVII. To your fair sister.

Madam,

The dignity, and the good fortune due to your Letter, hath preserved a pacquet so well, that through *France* and *Germany* it is at last come to me at *Spâ*. This good experience makes me in despite of contrary appearances, hope that I shall finde some messenger for this before I remove, though it be but two dayes. For even Miracles are but little and slight things, when any thing which either concernes your worthinesse is in consideration or my valuation of it. If I faile in this hope of a messenger, I shall not grudge to do my self this service of bringing it into *England*, that you may hear me say there, that I have thus much profited by the honour of your conversation, and Contemplation, that I am, as your vertues are, every where equall; and that that which I shall say then at *London*, I thought and subscribed at *Spâ*, which is, that I will never be any thing else, then

Your very humble and affectionate servant
J. Donne.

XCVIII. To the Honourable Knight Sir Henry Goodere.

Sir,

Because to remain in this sort guilty in your Lordships opinion doth not onely defeat all my future indevours, but lay a heavyer burden upon me, of which I am more sensible, which is ingratitude towards your Lordship, by whose favours I have been formerly so much bound; I hope your Lordship will pardon me this care and diligence which I use to rectifie my self towards you. To which purpose I humbly beseech your Lordship, to admit thus much into your consideration, that I neither hunted after this businesse at first, but apprehended it as it was presented to me, and might perchance have fallen into worse hands, nor proceeded otherwise therein, then to my poor discretion at that time seemed lawfull and requisite and necessary for my reputation, who held my selfe bound to be able to give satisfaction to any who should doubt of the case. Of all which, if your Lordship were returned to your former favourable opinions of me, you might be pleased to make this some argument, that after his Majesty had shewed his inclination to the first motion made in my behalf, I was not earnest to urge and solicit that advantage of priority, but as became me, contented my self to joyne with him who had made a later petition therein: and as soon as I understood how it was opposed or distasted, I threw it down at your Lordships feet, and abandoned it to your pleasure. Which it is necessary for me to say at this time, lest, if he who was interessed with me in that businesse shall have proceeded any farther therein since that time, your Lordship might conceive new suspicions of me. That your Lordships name was at all used therein, or that any words of mine occasioned such an errour in my servant, I am so sorry as nothing but a conscience of a true guiltinesse of having performed an injury to your Lordship (which can never fall upon me) could affect me more. But I, who to the measure of my comprehension, have ever understood your Lordships nobility and evenness, cannot fear that your Lordship will punish an oversight, like a crime: which should be effected upon me, if your Lordship should continue your disfavour towards me, since no penalty could come so burdenous to my minde and to my fortune as that. And since the repose of both consists in your Lordships favour, I humbly intreat to be restored to your favour, giving your Lordship my faith

in pawn that I wil be as wary of forfeting it by any second occasion, as I am sorry for this.

Yours J. D.

XCIX. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

I Had rather like the first best; not onely because it is cleanlier, but because it reflects least upon the other party, which, in all jest and earnest, in this affair, I wish avoided. If my Muse were onely out of fashion, and but wounded and maimed like Free-will in the *Roman Church*, I should adventure to put her to an Epithalamion. But since she is dead, like Free-will in our Church, I have not so much Muse left as to lament her losse. Perchance this businesse may produce occasions, wherein I may expresse my opinion of it, in a more serious manner. Which I speake neither upon any apparent conjecture, nor upon any overvaluing of my abilities, but out of a generall readinesse and alacrity to be serviceable and gratefull in any kinde. In both which poor vertues of mine, none can pretend a more primary interest, then you may, in

Your humble and affectionate servant

J. Donne.

C. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre Gentleman of his Highnesses Bedchamber.

Sir,

I Have often sinned towards you, with a presumption of being pardoned, but now I do it, without hope, and without daring to intreat you to pardon the fault. In which there are thus many degrees of importunity. That I must begge of you to christen a child, which is but a daughter, and in which you must be content to be associated with Ladies of our own alliance, but good women, and all this upon Thursday next in the afternoon. Sir, I have so many and so indeleble impressions of your favour to me, as they might serve to spread over all my poor race. But since I see that I stand like a tree, which once a year beares, though no fruit, yet this Mast of children, and so am sure, that one year or other I should afflict you with this request, I had rather be presently under the obligations and the thankfulnesse towards you, then meditate such a trouble to you against another year. I was desirous this paper might kisse your hands as soon as you came, that if any other diversions made this inconvenient to you, I might have an other exercise of your favour, by knowing so much from you, who in every act of yours make me more and more

Your humble and thankfull servant

J. Donne.

17 Aprill.

CI. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

Perchance others may have told you, that I am relapsed into my Fever; but that which I must intreat you to condole with me, is, that I am relapsed into good degrees of health; your cause of sorrow for that, is, that you are likely to be the more troubled with such an impertinencie, as I am; and mine is, that I am fallen from fair hopes of ending all; yet I have scaped no better cheap, then that I have paid death one of my Children for my Ransome. Because I loved it well, I make account that I dignifie the memorie of it, by mentioning of it to you, else I should not be so homely. Impute this brevitie of writing to you upon no Subject to my sicknesse, in which men use to talke idly: but my profession of desiring to bee retained in your memorie, impute to your owne Vertues, which have wrought so much upon

Your humble servant

John Donne.

CII. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

I Make account that it is a day of great distribution of Honours at Court: I would not therefore lose my part, and increase therein; since every Letter admitted by you from me, is a new stone in my best building, which is, my roome in your service: so much you adde to me, everie time you give me leave thus to kisse your hands. But, Sir, everie addition preimagins a beeing, and the time of my beeing and Creation is not yet come: which I am sure you will advance; because else I am no competent Subject of your favours, and additions. I know, by your forbearing to tell mee so, that my L[ord] hath had no commoditie to move the K[ing] and if this Paper speake one word of difference, or impatience in my name, by my troth it lies. Onely give it leave to tell you, that that L. whom perchance the K. may bee pleased to heare in it, is an old and momentanie man, and it may be late labouring for his assistance, next Winter. Besides, since it may bee possible that the Master of the Rolles may a little resent this suite, there could be no fitter time, then now, to make him easie, as things stand with him at this time. If you stay in Towne this night, and no longer, I beseech you afford me a few of your late Minutes at your own lodging, where I will wait upon you according to any directions, which by this Gent. or otherwise I shall receive from you.

Your humble servant

John Donne.

CIII. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

If I would calumniate, I could say no ill of that Gentleman: I know not whether my L[ord] or my selfe tooke the first apprehension of it; but I remember that very soone wee concurred in a good opinion of him; thereupon for justifying our owne forwardnesse, wee observed him more th[o]roughly, and found all the way good reason to ratifie our first estimation of him. This gave my L. occasion to send him abroade in his Service after: how hee satisfied him in that imployment, indeed I know not. But, that I disguise nothing, I remember my L. told mee sometimes in his absence, that hee had not Account from him of some things, which hee had deposed in him. And at his entering into his Coach, at his last going, I asked my L. Goes not the gentleman with you? and hee told mee with some coldnesse no. So that if you bee not pressed to a Resolution, you may bee pleased to forbeare a few dayes, till I may occasionally discerne, whether hee have demerited or sunke in my L. opinion: And then you shall have another Character of him from

Your very humble and thankfull
Servant
J. Donne.

25. Julii.

CIV. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

SIR,

The same houre that I received the honour of your commandments, by your letter left at my poore house, I put my selfe upon the way hither. So that I am here in the habite of a Traveller, and (suitable to the rest of my unworthinesses) unfit for great Presences. Therefore, I abstain from waiting upon you presently; besides that in this abstinence, (except I misinterpret the last words of your letter to my advantage) I obey your directions, in sending before I come to you. Howsoever, Sir, I am intirely at your disposing, if you will be pleased to adde this favour to the rest, that I may understand, wherein you will use your Authoritie and Power, which you have over

Your poore and humble servant

J. Donne.

CV. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

SIR,
This is but a Postscript to the last Letter, and it is onely to tell you, that it was an impertinent jealousie that I conceived of that Gentlemans absence from my L[ord] for he gives that full Testimonie of him that he never discerned any kinde of unfitnesse in him for any imployment, except too much goodnesse; and Conscientiousnesse may sometimes make him somewhat lesse fit for some kindes of businesse, then a man of a looser raine. And this is all, that I conceive to have been in the commandment wherewith you honoured

Your very humble and thankfull
servant in Christ Jesus
J. Donne.
2. Aug. 1622.

CVI. To my Honoured Friend, Master George Gherard.

Sir,

Your Letter was the more welcome to mee, because it brought your commandment with it, of sending you perfumes: for it is a Service somewhat like a Sacrifice. But yet your commandment surprised me, when neither I had enough to send, nor had means to recover more; that Ladie being out of Towne which gave them me. But Sir, if I had 10000000. I could send you no more then I doe; for I send all. If any good occasion present it selfe to you, to send to my L[ord] *Clifford*, spare my name a roome, there where you offer him most of your Service. I dare contend with you, that you cannot exceed mee, in desiring to serve him. It is a better office from me to you, that I goe to bed, then that I write a longer letter. For if I doe mine eyes a little more injurie, I shall lose the honour of seeing you at Michaelmas; for by my troth I am almost blinde: you may be content to beleeve that I am always disposed to your service, without exception of any time, since just at midnight, when it is both day, and night, and neither, I tell you that I am

Your affectionate friend and servant

J. Donne.

CVII. To my very much honoured friend George Garrard Esquire at Sion.

Sir,

I Know not which of us wonne it by the hand, in the last charge of Letters. If you wonne, you wonne nothing, because I am nothing, or whatsoever I am, you wonne nothing, because I was all yours before. I doubt not but I were better delivered of dangers of relapses, if I were at *London*; but the very going would indanger me. Upon which true debility, I was forced to excuse my selfe to my Lord Chamberlaine, from whom I had a Letter of command to have Preached the fifth of *November* Sermon to the King. A service which I would not have declined, if I could have conceived any hope of standing it. I beseech you intreat my Lord *Percy* in my behalfe, that he will be pleased to name *George* to my L[ord] *Carli*[*s*]*le,* and to wonder, if not to inquire, where he is. The world is disposed to charge my Lords honour, and to charge my naturall affection with neglecting him, and, God knowes, I know not which way to turn towards him; nor upon any message of mine, when I send to kisse my Lords hands, doth my Lord make any kinde of mention of him. For the Diamond Lady, when time serves, I pray look to it; for I would fain be discharged of it. And for the rest, let them be but remembered how long it hath been in my hands, and then leave it to their discretion. If they incline to any thing, I should chuse shirt *Hollond*, rather under then above 4 *s.* Our blessed Saviour multiply his blessings upon that noble family where you are, and your self, and your sonne; as upon all them that are derived from

Your poor friend and servant

J. Donne.

CVIII. To my very much respected friend Mr. George Garrard.

Sir,

I Thank you for expressing your love to me, by this diligence; I know you can distinguish between the voyces of my love, and of my necessity, if any thing in my Letters sound like an importunity. Besides, I will adde thus out of counsell to you, that you can do nothing so thriftily as to keep in your purpose the payment of the rest of this years rent, (though at your conveniency) for Sir *E. H*[*'s*] curiosity being so served at first, I shall be no farther cause, but that the rest be related, and you in as good possession of his love, and to as good use, as your love deserves of him. You mocke us when you aske news from hence. All is created there, or relates thither where you are. For that book which you command me to send, I held it but half an hour: which served me to read those few leafes, which were directed upon some few lines of my book. If you come to town quickly, you may get a fair widow: for M^{ris} *Brown* is fallen to that state by death of her husband. No man desires your comming more, nor shall be readier to serve you, then

Your affectionate friend and servant

J. Donne.

CIX. To my Honoured friend Mr George Gherard, over against Salisbury house.

Sir,

I Do not make account that I am come to *London*, when I get within the wall: that which makes it *London* is the meeting of friends. I cannot therefore otherwise bid my self welcome to *London*, then by seeking of you, which both Sir *H. Goodere* and I do, with so much diligence, as that this messenger comes two dayes before to intreat you from us both, to reserve your self upon Saterday: so that I may, at our coming to *London* that night, understand at my house where I may send you word of our supping place that night, and have the honour of your company. So you lay more obligations upon

Your poor unprofitable servant
J. Donne.

CX. To the very much Honoured friend George Garret Esquire.

Sir,

When we thinke of a friend, we do not count that a lost thought, though that friend never knew of it. If we write to a friend, we must not call it a lost Letter, though it never finde him to whom it was addressed: for we owe our selves that office, to be mindefull of our friends. In payment of that debt, I send out this Letter, as a Sentinell Perdue; if it finde you, it comes to tell you, that I was possessed with a Fever, so late in the year, that I am afraid I shall not recover confidence to come to *London* till the spring be a little advanced. Because you did our poor family the favour to mention our *George* in your Letters to *Spain*, with some earnestnesse, I should wonder if you never had any thing from thence concerning him; he having been now, divers moneths, in *Spaine*. If you be in *London* and the Lady of the Jewell there too, at your conveniency informe me what is looked for at my hands, in that businesse; for I would be loath to leave any thing in my house when I die that were not absolutely mine own. I have a servant, *Roper*, at *Pauls* house, who will receive your commandments, at all times. God blesse you and your sonne, with the same blessings which I begge for the children, and for the person of

Your poor friend and humble
servant in Chr. Jes.
J. Donne.

CXI. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre, Gentleman of his Highnesses Bed-chamber.

Sir,

I Am come to that tendernesse of conscience, that I need a pardon for meaning to come to *Newmarket* in this weather. If I had come I must have asked you many reall pardons, for the many importunities that I should have used towards you. But since I have divers errands thither, (except I belie my self in that phrase, since it is all one errand to promove mine own business, and to receive your commands) I shall give you but a short respit, since I shall follow this paper within two dayes. And (that I accuse my self, no farther then I am guilty) the principall reason of my breaking the appointment of waiting upon M. *Rawlins*, was, that I understood the King was from *Newmarket*; and for comming thither in the Kings absence, I never heard of excuse; except when *Butler* sends a desperate Patient in a Consumption thither for good aire, which is an ill errand now. Besides that I could not well come till now, (for there are very few dayes past, since I took Orders) there can be no losse in my absence except when I come; my Lord should have thereby the lesse latitude, to procure the Kings Letters to *Cambridge*. I beseech you therefore, take some occasion to refresh that businesse to his Lordship, by presenting my name, and purpose of comming very shortly: and be content to receive me, who have been ever your servant, to the addition of

Your poor Chaplaine

J. Donne.

27 January.

CXII. To the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount of Rochester.

My most Honourable good Lord,

After I was grown to be your Lordships, by all the titles that I could thinke upon, it hath pleased your Lordship to make another title to me, by buying me. You may have many better bargaines in your purchases, but never a better title then to me, nor any thing which you may call yours more absolutely and intirely. If therefore I appeare before your Lordship sometimes in these Letters of thankfulnesse, it may be an excusable boldnesse, because they are part of your evidences by which you hold me. I know there may be degrees of importunity even in thankfulnesse: but your Lordship is got above the danger of suffering that from me, or my Letters, both because my thankfulnesse cannot reach to the benefits already received, and because the favour of receiving my Letters is a new benefit. And since good Divines have made this argument against deniers of the Resurrection, that it is easier for God to recollect the Principles, and Elements of our bodies, howsoever they be scattered, then it was at first to create them of nothing, I cannot doubt, but that any distractions or diversions in the ways of my hopes, will be easier to your Lordship to reunite, then it was to create them. Especially since you are already so near perfecting them, that if it agreed with your Lordships purposes, I should never wish other station, then such as might make me still, and onely

Your Lordships

Most humble and devoted servant

J. Donne.

CXIII. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

Lest you should think your selfe too much beholding to your fortune, and so relie too much upon her hereafter, I am bold to tell you, that it is not onely your good fortune that hath preserved you from the importunity of my visits all this time. For my ill fortune, which is stronger then any mans good fortune hath concurred in the plot to keep us asunder, by infecting one in my house with the Measels. But all that is so safely overworne, that I dare, not onely desire to put my selfe into your presence, but by your mediation, a little farther. For, esteeming my selfe, by so good a title as my Lords own words, to be under his providence, and care of my fortune, I make it the best part of my studies how I might ease his Lordship by finding out something for my selfe. Which, because I thinke I have done as though I had done him a service therein, I adventure to desire to speake with him, which I beseech you to advance, in addition to your many favours and benefits to me. And if you have occasion to send any of your servants to this town, to give me notice what times are fittest for me to waite, to injoy your favour herein. My businesse is of that nature, that losse of time may make it much more difficult, and may give courage to the ill fortune of

Your humble servant

J. Donne.

CXIV. To your selfe.

Sir,

I Make shift to think that I promised you this book of French *Satyrs*. If I did not, yet it may have the grace of acceptation, both as it is a very forward and early fruit, since it comes before it was looked for, and as it comes from a good root, which is an importune desire to serve you. Which since I saw from the beginning, that I should never do in any great thing, it is time to begin to try now, whether by often doing little services, I can come towards any equivalence. For, except I can make a rule of naturall philosophy, serve also in morall offices, that as the strongest bodies are made of the smallest particles, so the strongest friendships may be made of often iterating small officiousnesses, I feel I can be good for nothing. Except you know reason to the contrary, I pray deliver this Letter according to the addresse. It hath no businesse nor importunity; but as by our Law, a man may be *Felo de se*, if he kill himself, so I think a man may be *Fur de se*, if he steale himselfe out of the memory of them, which are content to harbour him. And now I begin to be loath to be lost, since I have afforded my selfe some valuation and price, ever since I received the stampe and impression of being

Your very humble and affectionate servant

J. Donne.

CXV. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre, Gentleman of his Highnesses Bed chamber.

Sir,

I Have always your leave to use my liberty, but now I must use my bondage. Which is my necessity of obeying a precontract laid upon me. I go to morrow to *Camberwell* a mile beyond *Southwark*. But from this town goes with me my brother Sir *Tho. Grimes* and his Lady, and I with them. There we dine well enough I warrant you, with his father-in-law, Sir *Tho. Hunt*. If I keep my whole promise, I shall Preach both forenoon and afternoon. But I will obey your commandments for my return. If you cannot be there by 10, do not put your selfe upon the way: for, Sir, you have done me more honour, then I can be worthy of, in missing me so diligently. I can hope to hear M. *Moulin* again: or ruminate what I have heretofore heard. The onely misse that I shall have is of the honour of waiting upon you; which is somewhat recompensed, if thereby you take occasion of not putting [not] your self to that pain, to be more assured of the inabilities of

Your unworthy servant

J. Donne.

CXVI. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

I Sought you yesterday with a purpose of accomplishing my health, by the honour of kissing your hands. But I finde by my going abroad, that as the first Christians were forced to admit some *Jewish* Ceremonies, onely to burie the Synagogue with honour, so my Feaver will have so much reverence and respect, as that I must keep sometimes at home. I must therefore be bold to put you to the pain of considering me. If therefore my Lord upon your deliverie of my last Letter, said nothing to you of the purpose thereof; let me tell you now, that it was, that in obedience of his commandment to acquaint him with any thing which might advantage me, I was bold to present that which I heard, which was that Sir *D[udley] Carl[e]ton* was likely to bee removed from *Venice*, to the States; of which if my Lord said nothing to you, I beseech you adde thus much to your many other Favours, to intreate my Lord at his best commodity, to afford mee the favour of speaking with him. But if hee have already opened himselfe so farre to you, as that you may take knowledge thereof to him, then you may ease him of that trouble of giving mee an Audience, by troubling your selfe thus much more, as to tell him in my behalfe, and from mee, that though Sir *D. Carlton* bee not removed, yet that place with the States lying open, there is a faire field of exercising his favour towards mee, and of constituting a Fortune to me, and (that which is more) of a meanes for mee to doe him particular services. And Sir, as I doe throughly submit the end and effect of all Projects to his Lordships will, so doe I this beginning thereof, to your Advice and Counsell, if you thinke mee capable of it: as, for your owne sake, I beseech you to doe, since you have admitted mee for

Your humble servant

J. Donne.

CXVII. To the Honoured Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

I Amend to no purpose, nor have any use of this inchoation of health, which I finde, except I preserve my roome, and station in you. I beginne to bee past hope of dying: And I feele that a little ragge of *Monte Magor* [*Montemôr*], which I read last time I was in your Chamber, hath wrought prophetically upon mee, which is, that Death came so fast towards mee, that the over-joy of that recovered mee. Sir, I measure not my health by my appetite, but onely by my abilitie to come to kisse your hands: which since I cannot hope in the compasse of a few dayes, I beseech you pardon mee both these intrusions of this Letter, and of that within it. And though Schoole-men dispute, whether a married man dying, and being by Miracle raised again, must bee remarried; yet let your Friendship, (which is a Nobler learning) bee content to admit mee, after this Resurrection, to bee still that which I was before, and shall ever continue,

Your most humble and thankfull
Servant
J. Donne.

20. Mar.

CXVIII. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

When I was almost at Court, I met the Princes Coach: I thinke I obeyed your purposes best, therefore, in comming hither. I am sure I provided best for my selfe thereby; since my best degree of understanding is to bee governed by you. I beseech you give mee an assignation where I may wait upon you at your commoditie this Evening. Till the performance of which commandment from you, I rest here in the red Lion.

Your very thankefull and affectionate
Servant
J. Donne.

CXIX. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

I Was loth to bee the onely man who should have no part in this great Festivall; I thought therefore to celebrate that well, by spending some part of it in your company. This made mee seek you againe this afternoone, though I were guilty to my selfe of having done so every day since your comming. I confesse such an importunity is worthy to be punished with such a missing; yet, because it is the likeliest reparation of my Fortunes to hope upon Reversions, I would be glad of that Title in you: that, after solemnities, and businesses, and pleasures be passed over, my time may come, and you may afford some of your last leisures to

Your affectionate and humble servant

J. Donne.

4 Novemb.

CXX. To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

Your mans haste gives me the advantage, that I am excusable in a short Letter, else I should not pardon it to my selfe. I shall obey your commandment of comming so neare you upon *Michaelmas* day, as by a Message to aske you whether that or the next morning bee the fittest to sollicite your further Favour. You understand all Vertue so well, as you may be pleased to call to minde what thankefulnesse and services are due to you from me, and beleeve them all to bee expressed in this ragge of Paper, which gives you new assurance, that I am ever

Your most humble servant

J. Donne.

CXXI. To your selfe.

Sir,

If I shall never be able to do you any reall service, yet you may make this profit of me, that you be hereafter more cautelous in receiving into your knowledge, persons so uselesse, and importune. But before you come to so perfect a knowledge of me, as to abandon me, go forward in your favours to me, so farre, as to deliver this Letter according to the addresse. I think I should not come nearer his presence then by a Letter: and I am sure, I would come no other way, but by you. Be you therefore pleased, by these noble favours to me, to continue in me the comfort which I have in being

Your very humble and thankfull servant

J. Donne.

Drury house, 23 Sept.

CXXII. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre.

Sir,

A Few hours after I had the honour of your Letter, I had another from my Lord of *Bath* and *Wells*, commanding from the King a Copy of my Sermon. I am in preparations of that, with diligence, yet this morning I waited upon his Lordship, and laid up in him this truth, that of the B. of *Canterburies* Sermon, to this hour, I never heard syllable, nor what way, nor upon what points he went: And for mine, it was put into that very order, in which I delivered it, more then two moneths since. Freely to you I say, I would I were a little more guilty: Onely mine innocency makes me afraid. I hoped for the Kings approbation heretofore in many of my Sermons; and I have had it. But yesterday I came very near looking for thanks; for, in my life, I was never in any one peece, so studious of his service. Therefore, exceptions being taken, and displeasure kindled at this, I am afraid, it was rather brought thither, then met there. If you know any more, fit for me, (because I hold that unfit for me, to appear in my Masters sight, as long as this cloud hangs, and therefore, this day forbear my ordinary waitings) I beseech you to intimate it to

Your very humble and very thankfull servant

J. Donne.

CXXIII. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.

Sir,

I Humbly thanke you, for this continuing me in your memory, and enlarging me so far, as to the memory of my Soveraign, and (I hope) my Master. My Tenets are always, for the preservation of the Religion I was born in, and the peace of the State, and the rectifying of the Conscience; in these I shall walke, and as I have from you a new seal thereof, in this Letter, so I had ever evidence in mine own observation, that these ways were truly, as they are justly, acceptable in his Majesties eare. Our blessed Saviour multiply unto him all blessings; *Amen*.

Your very true and intire servant in Chr. Jes.

J. Donne.

CXXIV. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.

Sir.

I Was this morning at your door, somewhat early; and I am put into such a distaste of my last Sermon, as that I dare not practice any part of it, and therefore though I said then, that we are bound to speake aloud, though we awaken men, and make them froward, yet after two or three modest knocks at the door, I went away. Yet I understood after, the King was gone abroad, and thought you might be gone with him. I came to give you an account of that, which does as well. I have now put into my Lord of *Bath* and *Wells* hands the Sermon faithfully exscr[c]ibed. I beseech you be pleased to hearken farther after it; I am still upon my jealousie, that the King brought thither some disaffection towards me, grounded upon some other demerit of mine, and took it not from the Sermon. For, as Card[inal] *Cusanus* writ a Book *Cribratio Alchorani*, I have cribrated, and recribated, and post-cribated the Sermon, and must necessarily say, the King who hath let fall his eye upon some of my Poems, never saw, of mine, a hand, or an eye, or an affection, set down with so much study, and diligence, labour of syllables, as in this Sermon I expressed those two points, which I take so much to conduce to his service, the imprinting of persuasibility and obedience in the subject, And the breaking of the bed of whisperers, by casting in a bone, of making them suspect and distrust one another. I remember I heard the old King say of a good Sermon, that he thought the Preacher never had thought of his Sermon, till he spoke it; it seemed to him negligently and extemporally spoken. And I knew that he had weighed every syllable, for halfe a year before, which made me conclude, that the King had before some prejudice upon him. So, the best of my hope is, that some over bold allusions, or expressions in the way, might divert his Majesty, from vouchsafing to observe the frame, and purpose of the Sermon. When he sees the generall scope, I hope his goodnesse will pardon collaterall escapes. I intreated the B[ishop] to aske his Majesty, whether his displeasure extended so farre, as that I should forbear waiting, and appearing in his presence; and I had a return, that I might come. Till I had that, I would not offer to put my self under your roof. To day I come, for that purpose, to say prayers. And if, in any degree, my health suffer it, I shall do so, to morrow. If any thing fall into your observation before that,

(because the B. is likely to speake to the King of it, perchance, this night) if it amount to such an increase of displeasure, as that it might be unfit for me to appear, I beseech you afford me the knowledge. Otherwise, I am likely to inquire of you personally, to morrow before nine in the morning, and to put into your presence then

Your very humble and very true, and
very honest servant to God and
the King and you
J. Donne.

I writ yesterday to my L[ord] Duke, by my L[*ord*] Carlile, *who assured me of a gracious acceptation of my putting myself in his protection.*

CXXV. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.

Sir,

If I should refuse the liberty which you enlarge to me, of eating in your chamber, you might suspect that I reserved it for greater boldnesses, and would not spend it in this. But, in good faith, I do not eat before, nor can after, till I have been at home; so much hath my this years debility disabled me, even for receiving favours. After the Sermon, I will steal into my Coach home, and pray that my good purpose may be well accepted, and my defects graciously pardoned. *Amen.*

Yours intirely

J. Donne.

I will be at your chamber at one after noon.

CXXVI. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.

Sir,

I Pursued my ambition of having the honour to kisse your hands some where, so farre as to inform my selfe occasionally of my great neighbour. And I perceive he is under an inundation of uncertain commers, which he cannot devest, except I had your leave to speake plain to him. A second inconvenience is, that he is so deafe, that we must speak to the whole house, if we will speake to him. And a third is, that I am in a riddling, rather a juggling indisposition, fast and loose, and therefore dare not stirre farre. Yet Sir, I am not thereby unfit to receive the honour of seeing you here, if greater businesse have not overcome, or worn out, your former inclinablenesse to come into these quarters. If you shall be pleased to say to my man, that you will make as though you dined with me to day, and come, if your businesse require your going to his Lordship, you may dine with him, after you have fasted with me. Today, or any day, which may be more yours, I aske it of you with all earnestnesse, on this side importunity, which is the detestation of

Your humblest and thankfullest servant

J. Donne.

CXXVII. To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre, at Court.

Sir,

This morning I have received a signification from my Lord Chamberlaine, that his Majesty hath commanded to morrows Sermon at S. *James*; And that it is the afternoon; (for, into my mouth there must not enter the word, after-dinner, because that day there enters no dinner into my mouth.) Towards the time of the service, I aske your leave, that I may hide my selfe in your outchamber. Or if businesse, or privatenesse, or company make that inconvenient, that you will be pleased to assigne some servant of yours to shew me the Closet, when I come to your chamber. I have no other way there, but you; which I say not, as though I had not assurance enough therein, but because you have too much trouble thereby; nor I have no other end there, then the Pulpit: you are my station, and that my exaltation; And in both, I shall ever endevour to keep you from being sorry for having thought well of, or being ashamed of having testified well for

Your poor and very true
servant in Chr. Jrs.
J. Donne.

CXXVIII. To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre, at Court.

Sir,

I Have obeyed the formes of our Church of *Pauls* so much, as to have been a solemn Christmas man, and tryed conclusions upon my selfe, how I could sit out the siege of new faces, every dinner. So that I have not seen the B[ishop] in some weeks. And I know not whether he be in case, to afford that privacy, which you justly desire. This day, I am in my bondage of entertaining. Suppers I presume, are inconvenient to you. But this evening I will spie upon the B. and give you an account to morrow morning of his disposition; when, if he cannot be intire to you, since you are gone so farre downwards in your favours to me, be pleased to pursue your humiliation so farre as to chuse your day, and either to suffer the solitude of this place, or to change it, by such company, as shall waite upon you, and come as a visitor and overseer of this Hospitall of mine, and dine or sup at this miserable chezmey [*chez moi*].

Your humblest and thankfullest servant
J. Donne.

4 *Jan.* 1626

CXXIX. To my Noble friend M^ris^ Cokain at Ashburne.

My noblest sister,

But that it is sweetened by your command, nothing could trouble me more, then to write of my self. Yet, if I would have it known, I must write it my self; for, I neither tell children, nor servants, my state. I have never good temper, nor good pulse, nor good appetite nor good sleep. Yet, I have so much leasure to recollect my self, as that I can thinke I have been long thus, or often thus. I am not alive because I have not had enough upon me to kill me, but because it pleases God to passe me through many infirmities before he take me either by those particular remembrances, to bring me to particular repentances, or by them to give me hope of his particular mercies in heaven. Therefore have I been more affected with Coughs in vehemence, more with deafenesse, more with toothach, more with the vurbah, then heretofore. All this mellows me for heaven, and so ferments me in this world, as I shall need no long concoction in the grave, but hasten to the resurrection. Not onely to be nearer that grave, but to be nearer to the service of the Church, as long as I shall be able to do any, I purpose, God willing, to be at *London*, within a fortnight after your receit of this, as well because I am under the obligation of preaching at *Pauls* upon Candlemas day, as because I know nothing to the contrary, but that I may be called to Court, for Lent service; and my witnesse is in heaven, that I never left out S. *Dunstans*, when I was able to do them that service; nor will now; though they that know the state of that Church well, know that I am not so bound, as the world thinks, to preach there; for, I make not a shilling profit of S. *Dunstans* as a Church man, but as my L[ord] of *Dorset* gave me the lease of the Impropriation, for a certain rent, and a higher rent, the˜ my predecessor had it at. This I am fain to say often, because they that know it not, have defamed me, of a defectiveness towards that Church; and even that mistaking of theirs I ever have, and ever shall endevour to rectifie, by as often preaching there, as my condition of body will admit. All our company here is well, but not at home now, when I write; for, lest I should not have another return to *London*, before the day of your Carrier, I write this, and rest

Your very affectionate servant,
and friend, and brother

J. Donne.
15 Jan. 1630
Abrey-hatch.

THE END

NOTES

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY

"The most virtuous and excellent Lady M^{ris} Bridget Dunch," was the wife of Edmund Dunch of Wittenham, Berkshire, and the daughter of Sir Anthony Hungerford. Her mother, Elizabeth, was the daughter of Sir Thomas Lucy, son of the Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote whose deer play so large a part in the biographies of Shakespeare, and father of the Sir Thomas who became Donne's friend and correspondent. Her distinguished services as protectress of "that part of [Donne's] Soul, that he left behinde him, his Fame and Reputation" seem not to be elsewhere recorded.

I

Mistress Bridget White, to whom the first four letters are addressed, is not otherwise known. Mr. Edmund Gosse is inclined to identify her with the Lady Kingsmill of the fifth letter. This lady, the daughter of Thomas White, Esq., of Southwick, Hants, married Sir Henry Kingsmill in 1612, and lived until 1672. If Mr. Gosse's conjecture is correct, Mistress White was in her teens when the first four letters were written, and Donne about twenty years her senior. He writes from his lodgings in the Strand, between which and his house at Mitcham, near Croydon, Surrey, he divided his time from 1605 to 1610.

II

The allusion to the illness of Sir Edward Herbert, afterward Lord Herbert of Cherbury, fixes the date of this letter. He sailed from Dieppe for Dover in February, 1609, and came at once to London. In his *Autobiography* (ed. Sidney Lee, 2d edition, London, n. d., p. 60) Herbert writes,

"I had not been long in London, when a violent burning fever seized upon me, which brought me almost to my death, though at last I did by slow degrees recover my health."

This and the preceding letter appear to have been written on the same day.

IV

Perhaps Mistress White's brother accompanied Sir Edward Herbert, who writes (*loc. cit.*),

"The occasion of my going hither was thus: hearing that a war about the title of Cleves, Juliers, and some other provinces betwixt the Low Countries and Germany, should be made, by the several pretenders to it, and that the French king [Henry IV] himself would come with a great army into those parts; it was now the year of our Lord 1610, when my Lord Chandos and myself resolved to take shipping for the Low Countries, and from thence to pass to the city of Juliers, which the Prince of Orange resolved to besiege. Making all haste thither we found the siege newly begun; the Low Country army assisted by 4000 English under the command of Sir Edward Cecil."

Juliers surrendered on August 22, 1610.

V

Sir Henry Kingsmill died October 26th, 1624, the day on which this letter was written. If the Lady Kingsmel, or Kingsmill, to whom it is addressed, was the Bridget White of the first four letters, the difference in its tone is the more interesting. The girl to whom Donne wrote so gaily fifteen years before, is now a widow, and the poverty-stricken student of 1609 has become the great Dean of Saint Paul's.

VI

To Sir Thomas Lucy, grandson of the Sir Thomas immortalized as *Justice Shallow*. Lucy was a friend of the Herberts, with whom Donne afterward became intimate, and a man of no mean intellectual power.

Donne gave up his house in Mitcham, where this letter was written, in 1610 and never returned to it. Lucy went abroad with Sir Edward Herbert in 1608. This letter may belong to the autumn of 1607.

VII

This letter, like the next, was written in 1619, and but a few months after Donne's appointment as Divinity Reader to the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn,

"About which time," says Walton, "the Emperour of *Germany* died, and the Palsgrave, who had lately married the Lady *Elizabeth*, the King's onely daughter, was elected and crowned King of *Bohemia*, the unhappy beginning of many miseries in that Nation.

"King *James*, whose Motto (*Beati Pacifici*) did truly speak the very thoughts of his heart, endeavoured first to prevent, and after to compose the

discords of that discomposed State: and amongst other his endeavours did then send the Lord *Hay* Earl of *Doncaster* his Ambassadour to those unsetled Princes; and by a speciall command from his Majesty Dr. *Donne* was appointed to assist and attend that employment to the Princes of the Union: for which the Earl was most glad, who had alwayes put a great value on him, and taken a complacency in his conversation."

On the eve of his departure Donne placed in the hands of a few friends manuscript copies of unpublished writings for whose preservation he wished to provide.

ΒΙΑΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ, *A Declaration of that Paradoxe, or Thesis, that Selfe-Homicide is not so Naturally Sinne, that it may never be otherwise, wherein the Nature, and the extent of all these lawes, which seem to be violated by this Act, are diligently surveyed*, was not published until 1644, thirteen years after Donne's death. The manuscript of the ΒΙΑΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ which Donne gave to Sir Edward Herbert is now preserved in the Bodleian Library, to which Lord Herbert presented it in 1642, with the letter here printed and with the following inscription:

HUNC LIBRUM AB AUTHORE CUM EPISTOLA QUI PRAEIT ΑΥΤΟΓΡΑΦΩ DONO SIBI DATUM DUM EQUESTRIS OLIM ESSE ORDINIS EDVARDUS HERBERT, JAM BARO DE CHERBURY IN ANGLIA, ET CASTRI INSULAE DE KERRY IN HIBERNIA, E SUA BIBLIOTHECA IN BODLEIANAM TRANSTULIT MERITISS. IN ALMAN MATREM ACAD. OXON. PIETATIS ET OBSERVANTIAE ΜΝΗΜΟΣΥΝΟΝ, MDCXXII.

VIII

Sir Robert Ker (or Carr) accompanied King James from Scotland on his succession to the throne of England, and in 1603 became Groom of the Bedchamber to Henry, Prince of Wales. For many years he was Donne's "friend at court." In 1633 was made Earl of Ancrum. On the breaking out of the civil war he fled to Holland, where he died in 1654.

Donne's poems remained uncollected until after his death. *Poems by J. D. with Elegies on the Author's Death* appeared in 1633, and was reissued two years later.

IX

Lucy, the eldest daughter of the first Lord Harrington of Exton, and the wife of the third Earl of Bedford, was the faithful friend and generous patron not only of Donne, but of Jonson, Drayton, Daniel, and many another man of genius. One of Jonson's Epigrams in her honour is not so well known as it deserves to be:

On Lucy, Countess of Bedford

"This morning, timely rapt with holy fire,
I thought to form unto my jealous Muse,
What kind of creature I could most desire,
To honour, serve and love; as poets use.
I meant to make her fair, and free, and wise,
Of greatest blood, and yet more good than great;
I meant the day star should not brighter rise,
Nor lend like influence from his lucent seat.
I meant she should be courteous, facile, sweet,
Hating that solemn vice of greatness, pride;
I meant each softest virtue there should meet,
Fit in that softer bosom to reside.
Only a learned, and a manly soul
I purposed her; that should, with even powers,
The rock, the spindle, and the sheers control
Of Destiny, and spin her own free hours.
Such when I meant to feign, and wish'd to see,
My Muse bade, Bedford write, and that was she!"

In spite of Donne's opinion that "in letters, by which we deliver over our affection, and assurances of friendship ... times and daies cannot have interest," we may note that this letter must have been written earlier than February 1614, in which month died Lady Bedford's brother, the second Lord Harrington, to whom allusion is here made.

X

Susan, grand-daughter of William, Lord Burleigh, was the first wife of Philip, Earl of Montgomery. As Donne, on the eve of his German tour, leaves a copy of his *Biathanatos* in the safe-keeping of Sir Edward Herbert, and the manuscript of his poems in the hands of Sir Robert Ker, so he commits to the appropriate custody of the Countess of Montgomery ("A

new Susannah, equal to that old," Ben Jonson called her) the manuscript of a sermon, which, when she heard him preach it, she had commended.

The corrections bracketted in the text are from a MS. copy of the original, printed by Mr. Gosse, and reproduced here by his permission.

XI

To Sir Henry Goodyer, as is sufficiently indicated by the allusion to the weekly letter which Donne was in the habit of writing to this most intimate of his friends, and written from Mitcham, therefore not later than 1610. Sir Henry Goodyer, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber to James I, was the son of William Goodyer of Monks Kirby. He married his cousin Frances, daughter of Sir Henry Goodyer the elder, and on his father-in-law's death in 1595 succeeded to the family estates at Polesworth. Sir Henry seems to have been an open-minded, open-handed, easy-going man, with the defects of his qualities. His fortune slipped through his fingers and he died (1628) in poverty. I have no doubt that it was to Goodyer that Donne made the present of which Walton writes:

"He gave an hundred pounds at one time to an old friend, whom he had known live plentifully, & by a too liberal heart then decayed in his estate: and when the receiving of it was denied by saying, he wanted not; for as there be some spirits so generous as to labour to conceal and endure a sad poverty, rather than those blushes that attend the confession of it, so there be others to whom Nature and Grace have afforded such sweet and compassionate souls, as to pity and prevent the distresses of mankind; which I have mentioned because of Dr. Donne's reply, whose answer was, I know you want not what will sustain nature, for a little will do that; but my desire is that you who in the dayes of your plenty have cheered the hearts of so many of your friends, would receive this from me, and use it as a cordiall for the cheering of your own: and so it was received."

Goodyer's epitaph is quoted by Camden in the *Remaines concerning Britain*:

"To the honour of Sir Henry Goodyer of Powlesworth, a Knight memorable for his vertues, an affectionate Friend of his framed this Tetrastich:

'An ill year of a Goodyer us bereft,
Who gone to God, much lack of him here left:

Full of good gifts, of body and of mind,
Wise, comely, learned, eloquent and kind.’”

XII

To Sir Henry Goodyer. This letter belongs to 1607 or 1608, and was written from Mitcham. Sick in mind and in body, poor in purse and in hopes, Donne’s thoughts dwelt on suicide, and the fruit of his meditations was the book “of not much less than three hundred pages,” *Biathanatos,* of which we have already heard. The “meditation in verse which I call a litany” is printed in the Poems (ed. Chambers, Vol. II, p. 174).

The report that Broughton had gone over to Rome was without foundation in fact, though the rumour was of periodical occurrence.

XIII

George Garet, or Gerrard, the son of Sir William Gerrard of Dorney, Bucks, was one of Donne’s closest friends, and to him are addressed many of Donne’s more personal letters.

For what importunities in his behalf Donne here makes grateful acknowledgment we have no means of determining. The letter probably dates from 1614, when Donne was anxiously seeking profitable employment at Court.

XIV

“That good Gentlewoman,” Bridget, wife of Sir Anthony Markham, was the daughter of Lady Bedford’s brother, the second Lord Harrington of Exton, and one of the Ladies of the Bedchamber to Queen Anne. She died at Lady Bedford’s house at Twickenham, May 4th, 1609, about which time this letter was written. Donne’s Elegy is printed in his Poems (ed. Chambers, Vol. II, p. 86).

Sir Thomas Roe was the grandson of the Lord Mayor of the same name. He was knighted in 1604 by King James, who, ten years later, appointed him ambassador to the Great Mogul. He died in 1644. To him is addressed Ben Jonson’s Epigram, XCVIII.

XV

To George Gerrard’s sister, and belonging to the same period as XIII.

XVI

Probably written from Amiens, to which place Donne accompanied Sir Robert Drury in 1611, on that journey during which he had the vision described by Walton:

"Two days after their arrival there [in Paris], Mr. *Donne* was left alone in that room in which Sir *Robert*, and he, and some other friends had din'd together. To this place Sir *Robert* return'd within half an hour, and, as he left, so he found Mr. *Donne* alone; but in such an Extasie, and, so alter'd as to his looks, as amaz'd Sir *Robert* to behold him: insomuch that he earnestly desired Mr. *Donne* to declare what had befaln him in the short time of his absence? to which, Mr. *Donne* was not able to make a present answer: but, after a long and perplext pause, did at last say, *I have seen a dreadful vision since I saw you; I have seen my dear wife pass twice by me through this room, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms: This I have seen since I saw you.* To which Sir *Robert* reply'd; '*Sure Sir, you have slept since I saw you; and, this is the result of some melancholy dream, which I desire you to forget, for, you are now awake.*' To which Mr. *Donne's* reply was, '*I cannot be surer that I now live, then, that I have not slept since I saw you: and I am as sure, that at her second appearing, she stopt, and look'd me in the face, and vanisht.*' Rest and sleep, had not alter'd Mr. *Donne's* opinion the next day: for he then affirm'd this vision with a more deliberate, and so confirm'd a confidence, that he inclin'd Sir *Robert* to a faint belief that the Vision was true. — It is truly said, *that desire, and doubt, have no rest*: and it prov'd so with Sir *Robert*, for he immediately sent a servant to *Drewry* house, with a charge to hasten back, and bring him word, whether Mrs. *Donne* were alive? and if alive, in what condition she was, as to her health? — The twelfth day the Messenger returned with this account — That he found and left Mrs. *Donne* very sad, and sick in her bed: and, that after a long and dangerous labour, she had been deliver'd of a dead child. And upon examination, the abortion prov'd to be the same day, and about the very hour that Mr. *Donne* affirm'd he saw her pass by him in his Chamber."

XVII

This letter seems to belong to the same period as the last, and to have been intended by Donne as a sort of circular letter "to all my friends" at

home.

XVIII

Written in 1608, as the reference to the sudden death of Captain Edmund Whitelocke indicates. Walton, who quotes a part of this letter, gives the date as September 7th.

Mr. Jones may have been the friend to whose custody Tobie Matthew was committed between his sentence of banishment and his departure from England. (See Note on XLV, below.) Mr. Holland was Henry Holland, the son of Philemon Holland, the translator of Suetonius and much else. The Lord of Sussex was Robert Ratcliffe, Earl of Sussex.

XIX

The postscript to this letter, written, like that which follows it, from Mitcham in the closing years of Donne's residence there, is serious enough, but the letter itself must be understood as extravagant banter, not without a touch of bitterness. "When sadness dejects me," says Donne in a letter (XXV) written about this time, "either I countermine it with another sadnesse, or I kindle squibs about me again, and flie into sportfulnesse." The present letter is the fruit of such a mood.

The *Aurum Reginae* is the Queen Consort's share (one-tenth) of all fines exacted by the King, which under the old law was due to her. Mr. Hakewill was Queen Anne's Solicitor-General.

XXI

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and written after Sir Henry had entered the service of the Earl of Bedford and before Donne's removal from Mitcham to Drury House, therefore in 1609 or 1610. The reference to "the new astronomy" is interesting. In 1609 Keppler announced his discovery of some of the laws governing planetary motion, although it was not until the following year that the Copernican System was, by the discoveries of Galileo, firmly established. Donne's mind seems to have been open to the new knowledge, when Bacon's was firmly closed against it.

XXII

The reference to "my day" for payment of "this duty of letters," enables us to identify Donne's correspondent as Sir Henry Goodyer, to whom Donne was in the habit of writing every Tuesday. (Cf. the first sentence of

XVIII.) When the present letter was written Donne was employed in assisting Thomas Morton, Dean of Gloucester, and the leader of the Anglican theologians in the all but interminable controversy with the Jesuits which involved so many of the ablest churchmen of the period. The "Apology" was probably Robert Parson's "confused and worthless work," the *Treatise tending towards Mitigation*, in reply to which Sutcliffe published his *Subversion* in 1606, and Morton, two years later, his *Preamble unto an Encounter*, which, happily belying its name, went far toward closing the debate.

XXIII

The loss of her ladyship's verses on Donne, which are the subject of this letter, is the more to be regretted as none of her composition survives, though verses in her honour are found in the works of Donne, Ben Jonson, Daniel, Drayton, and other poets. This letter belongs to the same period as XXI.

XXIV

The postscript enables us to date the letter near the end of Donne's residence at Mitcham, when he was engaged in the politico-theological studies which resulted in the composition of the *Pseudo-Martyr* in 1609.

XXV

Sir Henry Goodyer had lost both father and father-in-law long before his friend had occasion "to reduce to his thoughts the duties of a husband and a father, and all the incumbencies of a family." The reference in this letter to "your father's health and love" therefore seems to preclude the possibility that it was addressed to Goodyer. The absence of a date makes conjecture as to the identity of Donne's correspondent the more difficult. Fortunately the interest of the letter is independent of knowledge of the correspondent to whom it was addressed, consisting as it does in the light which it throws on the mental temperament of the writer.

XXVI

The marriage of the Princess Elizabeth and the Count Palatine took place in February, 1613. This letter with its anticipations of the great event may safely be assigned to the journey on which Donne accompanied Sir Robert

Drury in 1611-12. “My book of M[ris] Drury” is Donne’s strange poem in commemoration of the first anniversary of the death in 1610 of Sir Robert Drury’s little daughter Elizabeth. *An Anatomie of the World, wherein by occasion of the untimely death of Mistress Elizabeth Drury, the frailty and decay of this whole world is represented*, was published in 1611. The extravagance of the homage here paid to a child whom Donne had never seen, and on whose father’s bounty he and his family were living, was regarded by some of his friends as savoring rather too patently of insincerity.

In commemoration of the second anniversary of Elizabeth Drury’s death, Donne published in 1612 a poem *Of the Progresse of the Soule*. *Wherein, by occasion of the religious death of Mistress Elizabeth Drury, the incommodities of the soule in this life, and her exaltation in the next, are contemplated.*

In 1618 Ben Jonson told Drummond “that Done’s Anniversarie was profane and full of blasphemies: that he told Mr. Done, if it had been written of the Virgin Marie, it had been something; to which he answered that he described the Idea of a Woman, and not as she was.” (*Conversations with Drummond, III.*)

XXVII

To Sir Henry Goodyer. The mention of “place and season” and the references to suffering of mind, body, and estate, enable us to date this letter from Mitcham in the spring of 1608, when Donne was in his thirty-fifth year.

XXVIII

William Fowler, to whom we have already had a jesting reference (XIX) was Secretary to Queen Anne. It is not clear whether the place to which Donne aspired was the secretaryship, which, as he was informed, Fowler was about to resign, or some other position in the Secretary’s gift which Donne was anxious to secure before Fowler went out of office. In either case, his hope was not realized.

XXIX

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and written in the summer of 1623 when the Prince and Buckingham were in Spain.

The current news from Bohemia must have been of especial interest to Donne in the light of his experience as the companion of Viscount Doncaster's journey to that unhappy country six years before. (See note to VII.)

XXX

To Sir Henry Goodyer. If the allusion to the "French Prince" refers to the visit of the Prince de Joinville who was "despatched back again" in June, 1607, this letter may be assigned to the summer of that year. "These two problems" are probably part of the *Iuvenilia, or Certaine Paradoxes and Problems, written by I. Donne* and published posthumously in 1633. The "ragge of verses" survives as the "Verse Letter to Sir Henry Goodyer," printed in Donne's Poems (ed. Chambers, Vol. II, p. 10). In the *Poems* of 1633 there is a copy of this letter following a text so much better than that of the *Letters* of 1651, that it has seemed worth while to reprint it in its entirety.

"Sir, — This Teusday morning, which hath brought me to London, presents mee with all your letters. Mee thought it was a rent day, I mean such as yours, and not as mine. And yet such too, when I considered how much I ought you for them. How good a mother, how fertile and abundant the understanding is, if shee have a good father. And how well friendship performes that office. For that which is denyed in other generations is done in this of yours. For hers is superfaetation, child upon child, and, that which is more strange, twinnes at a later conception. If in my second religion, friendship, I had a conscience, either *Errantem* to mistake good and bad, and indifferent, or *Opinantem* to be ravished by others opinions or examples, or *Dubiam* to adhere to neither part, or *Scrupulosam* to encline to one, but upon reasons light in themselves or indiscussed in mee (which are almost all the diseases of conscience) I might mistake your often, long, and busie letters, and fear you did but interest me to have mercy upon you and spare you. For you know our court tooke the resolution, that it was the best way to dispatch the French Prince backe againe quickly, to receive him solemnely, ceremoniously; and expensively, when he hoped a domestique and durable entertainment. I never meant to excell you in waight nor price, but in number and bulke I thought I might: Because he may cast up a greater summe who hath but forty small moneyes, than hee with twenty Portuguesses. The memory of friends (I meane only for letters) neither

enters ordinarily into busied men, because they are ever employed within, nor into men of pleasure, because they are never at home. For these wishes therefore which you wonne out of your pleasure and recreation, you were as excusable to mee if you writ seldom as Sir H. Wotten [who] is under the oppression of businesse or the necessity of seeming so: Or more than hee, because I hope you have both pleasure and businesse. Only to me, who have neither, this omission were sinne. For though writing be not of the precepts of friendship, but of the counsells: yet, as in some cases to some men counsells become precepts, though not immediately from God, yet very roundly and quickly from this Church, (as selling and dividing goods in the first time, continence in the Roman Church, and order and decency in ours) so to mee who can doe nothing else, it seemes to binde my conscience to write. And it is sinne to doe against the conscience, though that erre; Yet no mans letters may be better wanted than mine, since my whole letter is nothing else but a confession that I should and would write. I ought you a letter in verse before by mine owne promise, & now that you thinke you have hedged in that debt by a greater by your letter in verse I thinke it now most seasonable and fashional for mee to breake. At least, to write presently were to accuse my selfe of not having read yours so often as such a letter deserves from you to mee. To make my debt greater (for such is the desire of all, who cannot or meane not to pay) I pray reade these two problems: for such light flashes as these have beene my hawkings in my Surry journies. I accompany them with another ragge of verses, worthy of that name for the smalnesse, and age, for it hath long lyen among my other papers, and laughs at them that have adventured to you: for I thinke till now you saw it not, and neither you, nor it should repent it. Sir, if I were any thing, my love to you might multiply it, and dignifie it: But infinite nothings are but one such: Yet since even Chymeraes have some name, and titles, I am also,

"Yours,"

XXXI

That many of the letters headed "To Yourself" were addressed to George Gerrard there is ample evidence; that any of the letters so headed were addressed to another correspondent there is, so far as I know, no reason for believing.

Donne writes from Spa, to which place he accompanied Sir Robert and Lady Drury in May, 1612.

By 1582, the recurring annual error of approximately eleven minutes in the Julian calendar amounted to ten days. Pope Gregory XIII accordingly ordained that ten days should be deducted from the year 1582 by reckoning what according to the old calendar would have been the 5th, as the 15th of October. Spain, Portugal, and part of Italy carried out the Pope's instructions exactly; in France the change was deferred until December, when the 10th was reckoned as the 20th; in the Low Countries the change was from December 15th to December 25th. England did not adopt the change until 1752, when the 3d of September, old style, was reckoned as September 14th. "26 July *here* (i.e., at Spa) 1612" would, therefore, in England be July 16th, 1612.

Lord Treasurer Salisbury died May 24th, 1612. That contemporary estimate of his abilities which is, perhaps, most in accord with modern judgments is that of Francis Bacon:

"Soon after the death of a great Officer, who was judged no advancer of the King's Matters, the King said to his Sollicitor Bacon, who was his Kinsman: Now tell me truly, what say you of your Cousin that is gone? Mr. Bacon answered, Sir, since your Majesty doth charge me, I'll e'ne deal plainly with you, and give you such a character of him, as if I were to write his Story. I do think he was no fit Counsellor to make your Affairs better; but yet he was fit to have kept them from growing worse. The King said, On my So'l, Man, in the first thou speakest like a True Man, and in the latter like a Kinsman." (*Baconiana*, 1679, p. 55.)

XXXII

This letter may conceivably have been addressed to George Hastings, Fourth Earl of Huntingdon. I think, however, that "To my Lord G. H." is the younger Donne's mistake for "To Sir H. G." The reference to Lady Bedford, to whose husband's establishment Sir Henry Goodyer was at this time attached, and the tone of the letter in general seem to me to support this supposition. As Donne left London with Sir Robert Drury late in November, 1611, this letter may be attributed with some confidence to the latter part of that year.

XXXIII

To Sir Henry Goodyer. Mr. Gosse places this letter in point of date of composition between VI (October 9th, 1607) and XLV (March 14th, 1608). Certainly the three letters have points of resemblance striking enough to

serve as a basis for the inference that they belong to the same period of Donne's life. I know of no external evidence as to date, however, and the internal evidence is of the slightest. If, as I venture to infer from some of the expressions used, the letter was written after Donne had taken orders, it cannot be of earlier date than 1615.

XXXIV

Written from Peckham, the home of Sir Thomas Grymes, the husband of Donne's sister Jane. As the time of Donne's ordination (January, 1615) approached, he applied to several friends, Lady Bedford ("the Countess") and the Countess of Huntingdon ("the other Countess") among them, to help him pay his debts before making his "valediction to the world." Lady Bedford sent him £30; the Countess of Huntingdon responded even more liberally. Six verse letters to Lady Bedford and two to Lady Huntingdon are printed in Donne's Poems (ed. Chambers).

XXXV

Sir George More, Chancellor of the Garter and Lieutenant of the Tower (to whom the news of his daughter's secret marriage to Donne (1601) was "so immeasurably unwelcome, and so transported him, that, as though his passion of anger and inconsideration might exceed theirs of love and errour," he had procured his son-in law's dismissal from the post of Secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton), had, by the date of this letter, become "so far reconciled, as to wish their happinesse, and not to deny them his paternal blessing," though he still "refused to contribute any means that might conduce to their livelihood."

The Donnes had accepted the invitation of Mrs. Donne's cousin, Sir Francis Wooley, to be his guests, on his inheritance in 1602 of the estate of Pyrford, in Surrey, "where they remained with much freedom to themselves, and equal comfort to him for many years," says Walton. In reality their residence at Pyrford extended from some time in 1602 to the winter of 1604-5. To this period the letter belongs. The "entreaty that you let goe no copy of my Problems" may refer to some unrevised MS. of the *Iuvenalia*. (See note to XXX.)

XXXVI

To Sir Henry Goodyer. “My custom of writing” is one of the many allusions to Donne’s weekly letter to Goodyer. I find nothing in the present letter on which to base any very accurate dating.

XXXVII

To George Gerrard. The nearest indication of the date of this letter is found in the mention of Sir Germander Pool. John Chamberlain in a letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, dated March 10th, 1612/13 writes:

“I know not whether I told you in my former, of an odd fray that happened much about that time [February 23d, 1612/13] near the Temple, ‘twixt one Hutchison of Grays-Inn, and Sir German Pool; who, assaulting the other upon Advantage, and cutting off two of his Fingers, besides a Wound or two more before he could draw, the Gentleman finding himself disabled to revenge himself by the Sword, flew in upon him, and, getting him down, tore away all his Eyebrow with his Teeth, and then seizing on his Nose, tore away all of it, and carried it away in his Pockett.”

Mr. Gosse suggests that it is not unlikely that Sir Germander’s singular disfigurement led to the resignation of which Donne speaks.

With the exception of this letter and the passage just quoted from the *Winwood Memorials* I have been unable to find in print any reference to Sir Germander. Through the unwearying kindness of Mr. Gosse, however, and the researches of Lord Raglan, undertaken at his instance, I am able to give some particulars of the history of this unlucky knight. He was baptized — as German or Germaine (Germander is a corruption) — in 1573. He fought in Ireland under Montjoy in 1599; he was knighted at Dublin Castle by the Lord Deputy of Ireland on the 20th of April, 1603; and in 1625 he had so far triumphed over his misfortunes as to win the hand of Millicent, daughter of Francis Mundy, Esq., of Markeaton, who bore him a son.

XXXVIII

To Sir Henry Goodyer. More than once Donne insists on the sincerity of his letters. So he writes to Mrs. Herbert:

“If this sounds like a flattery, believe it not. I am to my letters rigid as a Puritan, as Cæsar was to his wife. I can as ill endure a suspicion and misinterpretable word as a fault.”

XXXIX

The reference to the cessation of hostilities in the Low Countries following the Truce of Bergen (April 19th, 1609) enables us to complete the date of this letter. “The best Lady,” here as elsewhere, is the Countess of Bedford. Perhaps the letter to Lady Bedford, enclosed in this letter, and presumably in verse, was written in acknowledgment of her verses on Donne, which are the subject of a letter to her already given (XXIII).

XL

To Sir John Harington, now best remembered as the translator of Ariosto, and one of the brilliant group of poets and wits which met at the Countess of Bedford’s house at Twickenham and which included Ben Jonson, Drayton, Daniel, Donne, and many lesser lights. Harington died in 1612. Donne’s daughter Lucy was born at Mitcham in 1608 and died nineteen years later at the Deanery of Saint Paul’s.

XLI

Sir Henry Wotton was in England when this letter was written early in 1612, and Donne was probably at Amiens, shortly to proceed to Paris with Sir Robert Drury. The phrase “when I was last here” is the only known evidence of an earlier visit to France.

In the *Life of Wotton*, Walton writes:

“I must not omit the mention of a love that was there [at Oxford] begun betwixt him and Dr. Donne, sometime Dean of St. Paul’s; a man of whose abilities I shall forbear to say anything, because he who is of this nation, and pretends to learning or ingenuity, and is ignorant of Dr. Donne, deserves not to know him. The friendship of these two I must not omit to mention, being such a friendship as was generously elemented; and as it was begun in their youth, and in an University, and there maintained by correspondent inclinations and studies, so it lasted till age and death forced a separation.”

XLII

This letter, to Sir Henry Goodyer, was written but a few weeks later than the preceding letter to Sir Henry Wotton. Their arrangement in sequence is one of John Donne, Junior’s rare triumphs as an editor of correspondence. The two letters admirably illustrate the manysidedness of Donne’s contact

with the life of his time, social, political, and ecclesiastical. For the date, see note to XXXI, above.

XLIII

There is no conclusive evidence, internal or external, as to which of Donne's correspondents is here addressed; certainly not Sir Henry Wotton, who was not a father, and who had recently returned from an important embassy in Germany, and who, a year later, became Provost of Eton College, to Bacon's great disappointment. The intimate tone of the letter suggests that it was addressed to Sir Henry Goodyer, who had already begun to be "encombred and distressed in his fortunes."

XLIV

A. V[*uestra*] *Merced*, "to your worship," is the common Spanish form of address. The allusion to the plague enables us to assign the letter to 1608, and this date in connection with the references to "My Lady" [Bedford] and to "Twicknam" suggest that Donne's correspondent was Sir Henry Goodyer, in the service of the Earl of Bedford. "Mistress Herbert" is Mrs. Magdalen Herbert, the mother of the saintly George Herbert and his unsaintly brother Edward. Of Mrs. Herbert, after she had become Lady Danvers, Donne speaks in what is perhaps the best remembered of his poems, the lines beginning:

"No spring, nor summer beauty hath such grace
As I have seen in one autumnal face,"

and the best remembered of his sermons, except *Death's Duel*, is that in commemoration of her death.

"M^{ris} Meauly" according to Dr. Jessopp (quoted by Mr. Gosse) is Mistress Meautys, one of the members of Lady Bedford's household, and, if so, possibly a connection of Bacon's faithful follower.

XLV

"M. Mathews" is Toby Matthew, the eldest son of Dr. Tobias Matthew, Archbishop of York. Three years before, while travelling in Italy, he had become converted to Romanism. On his return to England in the summer of 1607, his case was laid before the King, who suggested that he be required to take the oath, abjuring allegiance to Rome. This he refused to do, and was committed to the Fleet prison by Dr. Bancroft, Archbishop of

Canterbury, and there visited by Bishop Andrews, Morton, then Dean of Gloucester, Sir Henry Goodyer, Donne, and others. In a letter dated 11th February 1607 the voluminous Chamberlain wrote to Carleton:

"Your friend, Tobie Matthew, was called before the Council-table on Sunday in the afternoon, and, after some schooling, the Earl of Salisbury told him that he was not privy to his imprisonment, which he did in no ways approve, as perceiving that so light a punishment would make him rather more proud and perverse. But in conclusion they allotted him six weeks' space to set in order and depart the realm."

He left England accordingly, and lived on the Continent until 1623, when he was forgiven, invited to return, and knighted by the King. Apart from his extraordinary personality his chief claim on our interest is that he was the life-long friend and correspondent of Francis Bacon.

XLVI

To Sir Henry Goodyer. Written between the death of Sir Geoffrey Fenton in October, 1608, and the performance of Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queens* on February 2d, 1609. Donne was not successful in his attempt to secure the position left vacant by Fenton's death, for all the "haste and words" of Lord Hay and other friends. James Hay was a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber in Scotland, and came to England with the King. In 1603 the King appointed him Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and knighted him. In 1606 he was made Lord Hay, and afterwards became Viscount Doncaster, and Earl of Carlisle. Donne accompanied him on his embassy to the Palatinate. (See note on VII, above.)

This letter gives us our earliest mention of a warm friendship that lasted as long as Donne lived. In his will he bequeathed to Carlisle "the picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary which hangs in the little dining-chamber."

XLVII

To Sir Henry Goodyer. I cannot identify the "paper" the composition of which helped Donne to pass the anxious hours that brought him a son; but as the letter was written during his residence at Mitcham, where the Donnes went to live shortly after the birth of their son George, the birth here recorded must have been that of Francis, Donne's fourth child and third son, who was baptized at Mitcham January 8th, 1607, and who died in infancy.

John, who survived to be the first editor of these letters, was now three years old.

XLVIII

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and apparently written during the anxious weeks between Donne's decision to enter the church and his ordination in January, 1615. (See note on XXXIV, above.) "That good lady" is, of course, the Countess of Bedford, "Mr. Villars" is George Villiers, soon to be the Duke of Buckingham, and "Mr. Karre" is a nephew of Somerset, the present favourite. The "Masque of Gentlemen" may have been Ben Jonson's *The Golden Age Restored, in a Masque at Court, 1615, by the Lords and Gentlemen, the King's Servants*, first printed in the folio of 1616.

Sir Robert Rich, later Earl of Warwick, lived to become Lord High Admiral for the Parliament, 1643-5, 1648-9. Three years after the date of this letter we find Donne planning to meet Sir Robert at Frankfort. (XLII.) Lord Dorset (Richard, third Earl of Dorset) was one of the most generous of Donne's patrons. To him Donne owed the reversion of St. Dunstan's.

XLIX

To Sir Henry Goodyer and presumably of later date than the letter to Sir John Harington (XL) of August 6, 1608, which contains our earliest record of Donne's acquaintance with "that good lady," the Countess of Bedford, and to which allusion may be made in the last paragraph of the present letter. The Lord Harrington here mentioned must be one of the Harringtons of Exton, probably the second Lord Harrington, who was Lady Bedford's brother.

The home of Donne's brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Gryme, where the Donnes were frequent guests, was in Peckham.

L

To Sir Robert Drury, and written at the lowest ebb of Donne's fortunes, when he was casting about for court preferment of any kind. The marriage of Somerset and Lady Frances Howard, whose marriage to Essex had at length been annulled, took place December 26, 1613. One would be glad to forget that Donne wrote the beautiful epithalamium which connects him with this unholy union, and so gives the approximate date of this letter.

LI

That this letter was written in the year 1621, and not ten years earlier, is evident from the references to contemporary events. The contrast between Donne's circumstances as indicated in the present letter and his situation at the date of the preceding letter is striking. In less than three months from August 30th, 1621, he became Dean of Saint Paul's; from this date until the end his fame both as preacher and as saint, continued in the ascendent.

Archbishop Abbot's "accident" was his unfortunate killing of a game-keeper in Lord Zouch's park. No one doubted that the killing was accidental, but it was questioned whether the homicide, even though involuntary, did not render him incapable of holding the see of Canterbury. A commission appointed to inquire into the ecclesiastical status of the Archbishop at length reported that his title was without flaw. "Lady *Nethersoles*" is Goodyer's daughter Lucy, the wife of Sir Francis Nethersole.

LII

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and written in 1609. Mr. Gosse thinks the book here discussed is the Bishop of Lincoln's *Answer to a Catholic Englishman*, but Donne's criticism is equally applicable to a score of volumes which appeared in connection with the doctrinal controversy springing from the vexed questions arising in the King's relations with his Catholic subjects.

During this year Donne completed his *Pseudo-Martyr, Wherein out of certaine Propositions and Gradations, This Conclusion is evicted, That those which are of the Romane Religion in this Kingdome, may and ought to take the Oath of Allegeance*.

LIII

As to the identity of "Sir T. H." I have no conjecture to offer. Lord Cranfield "received his staffe" as Lord High Treasurer in September, 1621. For "my L. of Canterburies irregularity" see note to LI, above.

LIV

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and written in 1614 but a few months later than the letter to Sir Robert Drury already printed. (L.) The "Book of the Nullity" is apparently either the record of the legal proceedings looking to the annulment of the marriage of the Earl of Essex and Lady Frances

Howard or a brief, covering the arguments in favour of the nullity, drawn up by Donne in the hope of reward in the shape of patronage from Somerset.

LV

To Sir Henry Goodyer and written five months later than the preceding letter. Donne is still seeking court employment. The Lord Chancellor is Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Ellesmere, whom Donne had served as Secretary fifteen years before.

LVI

Written in 1619, on the eve of Donne's departure for the Palatinate. (See VII, note.) "My Lord" is, of course, Lord Hay. "M. Gher" is George Gerrard. "M. Martin" is presumably Donne's friend, Richard Martin, mentioned in XIX and XLI. He died a few months before the date of this letter, and Sir Henry Goodyer has evidently been urging Donne to write a poem in his memory.

The Queen died on March 2d. "That noble Countess" is Lady Bedford.

LVII

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and written three months after Donne became Dean of St. Paul's. Lady Ruthyn was the sister-in-law of the Earl of Kent, who had promised to Donne the living of Blunham in Bedfordshire.

LVIII

To Sir Henry Goodyer. The allusions to the birth of Donne's son Nicholas (baptized in August, 1613) and to the (erroneous) report of the death of Tobie Matthew, who was dangerously ill at Rome, give the date of this letter.

LIX

As Somerset and Lady Frances Howard were married in December, 1613, following the declaration of "the nullity" which is here in question, this letter must be assigned to January of the same year. (See notes to L and LIV, above.) I am unable to identify *G. K.* Lady Bartlet seems to have acted as housekeeper for Sir Robert Drury at Drury House, where the Donnes were living when this letter was written. "That noble lady at Ashworth" was the third wife of Donne's old friend and employer, Sir Thomas Egerton.

LX

Of this letter, and of LXVII, apparently sent to the same person, I can give no satisfactory account. An unpublished letter from Donne to Sir G. Brydges is said to be in existence, and the present letter may be addressed to him.

LXI

Evidently to Sir Henry Goodyer. "Your son Sir *Francis*" is Sir Francis Nethersole, who had married Goodyer's daughter Lucy, and who had apparently been imprisoned for debt.

Poor Constance Donne, a year after "her losse" here described, was married to Edward Alleyn, the actor-manager and founder of Dulwich College, a man who was considerably older than her father, and who seems to have made her thoroughly unhappy.

LXII

Evidently misdated for 1612, and written a few weeks after the date of XXXI. (See note to XVI.)

LXIII

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and written in 1614, but a few days after XLVIII.

LXIV

To Sir Henry Goodyer. The references to "the good Countess" of Bedford and to Mitcham fix the date of this letter as later than August, 1608, and earlier than the spring of 1610, when Donne moved his family to Drury House. Sir Henry Goodyer was now in the service of the Earl of Bedford.

LXV

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and written two days later than LXIII. Apparently Tobie Matthew had deposited a part of his fortune in Goodyer's keeping to avoid the possibility of confiscation. (See note to XLV, above.) By 1614 Sir Henry's affairs were in hopeless confusion. (See note to XI, above.)

No copy of Donne's Poems in an earlier edition than that of 1633 has been discovered, and it is unlikely that he carried out the intention, here expressed, of printing them during his lifetime.

LXVI

For “my L. of Canterburies businesse” see note to LI, above. “My little book of Cases” is presumably the *Paradoxes and Problems*.

LXVIII

Donne was presented to the living of Keyston, in Huntingdonshire, by the Benchers of Lincoln’s Inn in 1616. Wrest was the home of the Earl of Kent. (See note to LVII, above.) “My Lady Spencer,” the daughter of Sir John Spencer of Althorpe, and third wife of Sir Thomas Egerton, is “that noble lady at Ashworth” of LIX.

LXIX

To Sir Henry Goodyer. This letter appears to belong to the period of Sir Henry’s prosperity, and was written, I think, either from Mitcham, or from Donne’s lodgings in the Strand; in either case, not earlier than 1605 nor later than 1610. Parson’s Green was in the parish of Fulham, Middlesex. Ben Jonson has an *Epigram* (*LXXXV*) anent Sir Henry Goodyer’s hawks:

“Goodyere, I’m glad, and grateful to report,
Myself a witness of thy few days sport;
Where I both learn’d, why wise men hawking follow,
And why that bird was sacred to Apollo:
She doth instruct men by her gallant flight,
That they to knowledge so should tower upright,
And never stoop, but to strike ignorance;
Which if they miss, yet they should re-advance
To former height, and there in circle tarry,
Till they be sure to make the fool their quarry.
Now, in whose pleasures I have this discerned,
What would his serious actions me have learned?”

And in the verses enclosed in his letter (XXX) to Goodyer, Donne writes:

“Our soule, whose country is heaven, & God her father,
Into this world, corruptions sinke, is sent,
Yet, so much in her travaile she doth gather,
That she returnes home, wiser than she went;
It pays you well, if it teach you to spare
And make you asham’d, to make your hawks praise, yours,

Which when herselfe she lessens in the aire,
You then first say, that high enough she toures."

LXX

To Sir Thomas Roe. Until 1752, when by Act of Parliament the first day of January became the first day of the year, the year began on March 25th and ended on the following March 24th. What to Donne was "the last (day) of 1607" would be to us March 24th, 1608. Since 1752 therefore it has been a common practice in referring to dates falling between January 1st and March 24th inclusive of all years previous to the year 1752 to give both years. So we would give the date of the execution of Charles I as January 30th, 1648/49.

"The Mask" is possibly Ben Jonson's *The Hue and Cry after Cupid*, "celebrating the happy marriage of John Lord Ramsey, Viscount Hadington, with the Lady Elizabeth Ratcliffe," of which Rowland White wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury, "The great Maske intended for my L. Haddington's marriage is now the only thing thought upon at Court."

LXXI

I have not succeeded in finding a clue to the "accident" of which Donne writes. It would seem that some friend or relation of Sir Henry Goodyer's had met with sudden, and perhaps violent, death.

LXXII

In point of date of composition, this is probably the earliest of the published letters of Donne, who in December, 1600, had been for more than three years chief secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, the Lord Keeper, from whose friendly custody the Earl of Essex was set free in July, 1600.

The identity of "G. H." is unknown and conjecture is needless. Perhaps he was one of those followers of Essex who had been imprisoned at the time of the first trial of their unhappy leader, but who had not shared in his release.

Within the three months following the date of this letter Essex had again offended, this time beyond the possibility of pardon. He was beheaded on February 25th, 1601.

In such times, one may suppose that the Lord Keeper's young secretary had matters in hand more pressing than the payment of that debt of "a

continual tribute of letters" which he acknowledges with a gravity in which one imagines a touch of irony. Yet Donne could hardly help feeling a special interest in one whose attachment to Essex had brought him on evil days. He himself had served under Essex in the Cadiz expedition of 1596 and in the Islands Voyage of 1597, "waiting upon his Lordship," says Walton, "and being an eye-witnesse of those happy and unhappy employments," a privilege which in the latter enterprise he shared with young Thomas Egerton, the Lord Keeper's son.

LXXIII

This, like the other letters addressed "To Yourself" may not improbably be addressed to George Gerrard, who is known to have been a friendly critic of Donne's poems. The translation sent with this letter is almost certainly the lines "Translated out of Gazaeus, 'Vota Amico Facta,' Fol. 160:"

"God grant thee thine owne wish, and grant thee mine,
Thou who dost, best friend, in best things outshine;
May thy soule, ever cheerful, ne'er know cares,
Nor thy life, ever lively, know grey haires,
Nor thy hand, ever open, know base holds,
Nor thy purse, ever plump, know pleates, or folds,
Nor thy tongue, ever true, know a false thing,
Nor thy word, ever mild, know quarrelling,
Nor thy works, ever equal, know disguise,
Nor thy fame, ever pure, know contumelies,
Nor thy prayers know low objects, still divine;
God grant thee thine owne wish, and grant thee mine."

An edition of Enée de Gaza's *Theophrastus* was published at Zurich in 1560.

LXXIV

Evidently addressed, not to Sir Thomas Lucy, but to Sir Henry Goodyer as the allusions to Polesworth, Sir Henry's home, and to Bedford House sufficiently indicate. The date also must be incorrectly given as Donne's "service at Lincoln's Inne" did not begin until 1616, by which date, however, he had ceased to reside at Drury House, from which this letter, as printed, is dated. One is inclined to concur for the moment in Mr. Gosse's

opinion that the *Letters* of 1651 is “the worst edited book in the English language.”

LXXV

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and, as the record of the closing incidents of the Elector Palatine’s long struggle shows, written in 1622.

LXXVI

To Sir Henry Goodyer on the death of his wife in 1604.

LXXVII

To Sir Henry Goodyer. The quarrel between Hertford and Monteagle and the last illness of Cecil Boulstrod, here recorded, give the date of this letter as 1609. Cecil Boulstrod was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Anne. Ben Jonson read to Drummond his “Verses on the Pucelle of the Court, Mistress Boulstred, whose Epitaph Donne made.” They are little to the credit of either the lady or the poet. Drummond records in his *Conversations* that “that piece of the Pucelle of the Court was stolen out of his (Jonson’s) pocket by a gentleman who drank him drousie, and given Mistress Boulstraid; which brought him great displeasure,” as well it might. Donne wrote two elegies in her honour, one of which, at least, seems to be inspired by genuine emotion.

LXXVIII

To Sir Henry Goodyer and written in 1615. (See note to XXXIV, above.) “This Lady” is apparently the Countess of Huntingdon, and “the Lady where you are” the Countess of Bedford.

LXXIX

This letter, written on the eve of the German tour, on which Donne attended the Earl of Doncaster (See note to VII, above), was, I feel very sure, addressed, not to Sir Thomas Lucy, but to Sir Henry Goodyer. The allusions to Tuesday as a day of writing, the reference to “an establishment in your estate,” the acknowledgment of his correspondent’s favours in “keeping me alive in the memory of the noblest Countess” (of Bedford), all point to Goodyer.

LXXX

For the date see XXIV, and note.

LXXXI

To Sir Henry Goodyer, and evidently written just prior to Donne's appointment as Dean of Saint Paul's (November 19th, 1621). "My Cases of Conscience" is, I suppose, the *Paradoxes and Problems* to which we have had frequent allusions.

LXXXII

The identity of Donne's "worthy friend F. H." is unknown to me. The letter evidently belongs to the closing years of Donne's life. In printing this letter, Mr. Gosse (*Life and Letters of John Donne, II, 254*) quotes from Walton:

"The latter part of his life may be said to be a continued study; for as he usually preached once a week, if not oftener, so after his Sermon he never gave his eyes rest till he had chosen out a new Text, and that night cast his Sermon into a forme, and his Text into divisions; and the next day betook himself to consult the Fathers, and so commit his meditations to his memory, which was excellent. But upon Saturday he usually gave himself and his mind a rest from the weary burthen of his week's meditations, and usually spent that day in visitation of friends and other diversions of his thoughts; and would say that *he gave both his body and mind that refreshment, that he might be enabled to do the work of the day following, not faintly, but with courage and cheerfulness*."

LXXXIII

To Sir Henry Goodyer, but a few weeks earlier than the date of LXI, and at about the same time as LXXV. "Mr. Selden" is the great John Selden.

LXXXIV

Written from Sir John Danvers' house in Chelsea where Donne had gone to stay at the height of the plague which raged in London during the summer of 1625. Lady Danvers was Donne's old friend, Mrs. Magdalen Herbert. (See note to XLIV, above.) Sir Edward Sackville became Earl of Dorset on the 28th of March, 1624, on the death of his brother, the third Earl. King James died on the 27th of March, 1625. "The Queen" is Henrietta Maria, whom Charles married a few weeks after his accession.

LXXXV

To George Gerrard. “The 14th of April, here (i.e., at Paris) 1612” would in England be April 4th, 1612. For the criticisms of his poems in honour of Elizabeth Drury to which Donne here makes reply, see note to XXVI above.

LXXXVI

To George Gerrard, and apparently written within a few weeks of the date of the next letter, addressed to the same friend and dated January 7th 1630 in the 1719 edition of Donne’s Poems to which it is appended.

LXXXVII

To George Gerrard. Walton quotes this letter in full in his *Life of Donne*, and in spite of their length his comments cannot be omitted here:

“We left the Author sick in Essex, where he was forced to spend much of that winter, by reason of his disability to remove from thence: And having never for almost twenty yeares omitted his personall Attendance on his Majesty in that moneth in which he was to attend and preach to him; nor having ever been left out of the Roll and number of Lent-Preachers; and there being then (in January 1630) a report brought to London, or raised there, that Dr. Donne was dead: That report gave him occasion to write this following letter to a friend....

“Before that moneth ended, he was designed to preach upon his old constant day, the first Friday in Lent; he had notice of it, and had in his sicknesse so prepared for that imployment, that as he had long thirsted for it, so he resolved his weaknesse should not hinder his journey; he came therefore to London, some few dayes before his day appointed. At his being there many of his friends (who with sorrow saw his sicknesse had left him onely so much flesh as did cover his bones) doubted his strength to performe that task; and therefore disswaded him from undertaking it, assuring him however, it was like to shorten his daies; but he passionately denyed their requests, saying, *he would not doubt that God who in many weaknesses had assisted him with an unexpected strength, would not now withdraw it in his last employment; professing an holy ambition to performe that sacred work.* And when to the amazement of some beholders he appeared in the Pulpit, many thought he presented himself not to preach mortification by a living voice, but mortality by a decayed body and dying

face. And doubtlesse many did secretly ask that question in *Ezekiel, Do these bones live? or can that soul Organize that tongue, to speak so long time as the sand in that glasse will move towards its Centre, and measure out an hour of this dying mans unspent life?* Doubtlesse it cannot; yet after some faint pauses in his zealous prayer, his strong desires enabled his weake body to discharge his memory of his preconceived meditations; which were of dying, the Text being, *To God the Lord belong the issues from Death*. Many that then saw his teares, and heard his hollow voice, professing they thought the Text prophetically chosen, and that Dr. Donne *had preach't his own funerall sermon*.

"Being full of joy that God had enabled him to performe this desired duty, he hastened to his house, out of which he never moved, till like St. *Stephen, he was carryed by devout men to his Grave*."

LXXXVIII

This letter, addressed, I suppose, to Donne's sister Jane, the wife of Sir Thomas Grymes, is printed in the 1719 edition of the Poems, and is there dated "Amyens, the 7th of *Febr.* here, 1611," i.e., January 28th, 1612.

LXXXIX

To George Gerrard, and written from Paris not long after the date of the preceding letter.

XC

Written in 1624, during Donne's recovery from a dangerous illness. Here, as elsewhere, Walton is our best commentator:

"Within a few dayes his distempers abated; and as his strength increased, so did his thankfulnesse to Almighty God, testified in his *book of Devotions*, which he published at his recovery. In which the reader may see, the most secret thoughts that then possest his soul, Paraphrased and made publick; a book that may not unfitly be called a Sacred picture of spiritual extasies, occasioned and applyable to the emergencies of that sicknesse, which being a composition of *Meditations*, *disquisitions* and *prayers*, he writ on his sick-bed; herein imitating the holy Patriarchs, who were wont to build their Altars in that place, where they had received their blessings."

Donne's *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions and Several Steps in my Sickness* was published in 1624, and dedicated "To the most excellent prince, Prince Charles."

XCI

To George Gerrard, and written from the Low Countries, where Donne was travelling with Sir Robert Drury in the late summer of 1612.

XCII

To George Gerrard, and evidently an amplified version of LXXXV.

XCIII

Apparently written on Donne's return to London at the beginning of the winter of 1612-13. I imagine that George Gerrard and his sister had come up to London to meet Donne, but had, by some mischance, failed to find him.

XCIV

Written, I think, early in the summer of 1612, and, if so, from Paris, whither Donne had gone with his "noble neighbour," Sir Robert Drury. "That Noble Lady" is presumably the Countess of Bedford.

XCV

To George Gerrard, and like the next letter written from Amiens in the winter of 1611-12.

XCVII

To George Gerrard's sister, and written from Spa in the summer of 1612.

XCVIII

Certainly not addressed to Sir Henry Goodyer, but probably to Somerset, during the negotiations of which Walton, though with some inaccuracy, reports the happy ending:

"His Majesty had promised him a favour, and many persons of worth mediated with his Majesty for some secular employment for him, to which his education had apted him, and particularly the Earle of Somerset, when in his height of favour, being then at *Theobalds* with the King, where one of the Clerks of the Council died that night, the Earle having sent immediately

for Mr. *Donne* to come to him, said, *Mr.* Donne, *To testifie the reality of my affection, and my purpose to prefer you, stay in this garden till I go up to the King, and bring you word that you are Clerk of the Council*. The King gave a positive denial to all requests; and having a discerning spirit, replied, *I know Mr.* Donne *is a learned man, has the abilities of a learned Divine, and will prove a powerfull Preacher, and my desire is to prefer him that way*. After that, as he professeth, *the King descended almost to a solicitation of him to enter into sacred Orders*: which, though he then denied not, yet he deferred it for three years."

XCIX

Written in 1613. (See note on L, above.)

C

Donne's fifth daughter, Margaret, was christened April 20th, 1615, three days after the date of this letter.

CI

Mary, Donne's fourth daughter, died in May, 1614, in her fourth year.

CII

This letter, and CXIII, below, seem to belong to the same period, probably to the closing years of Donne's residence at Mitcham, when Donne may have begun to hope that through his acquaintance with the Earl of Bedford (who is, I think, here intended by "My Lord") he might obtain public employment of some kind.

CIII

This and the two following letters belong to July and August, 1622, and seem to relate to a single incident. Sir Robert Ker had apparently asked Donne for his opinion of one of his fellow-travellers in attendance on Lord Doncaster during the German tour. Donne's evident anxiety to be fair to both parties results in a somewhat indefinite answer.

CVI

Donne's eyes gave him a good deal of trouble in the winter of 1613-14; this letter, as well as LXVII, above, may belong to this period.

CVII

"In August, 1630," says Walton, "being with his eldest daughter, Mrs. Harvy, at Abury Hatch in Essex, he there fell into a fever, which, with the help of his constant infirmity (vapours from the spleen,) hastened him into so visible a consumption, that his beholders might say, as St. Paul said of himself, 'He dies daily.'" This letter was written from Abury (or Aldeburgh) Hatch. "Mrs. Harvy" is Donne's daughter Constance, the widow of Edward Alleyn, and now the wife of Samuel Harvey. Donne's son George, the soldier, was taking part in the campaign in Spain. Lord Carlisle was the old friend whom, as Lord Doncaster, Donne had attended in his German embassy. Lord Percy was Algernon Percy, soon to become fourth Earl of Northumberland.

CVIII

Written apparently before Donne had entered the church, and probably in 1614, while Donne was still living in Drury House. George Gerrard was at court. His "hopeful designs upon worthy widows" seem to have been the cause of much pleasantry. (See XIX.)

CIX

There is no certain indication of the date of this letter. Mr. Gosse assigns it conjecturally to 1622. It seems to me more likely that it belongs to the period of Donne's residence at Mitcham, and is of 1609, or earlier date. "My house" would then be Donne's lodgings in the Strand.

CX

Written not long after the date of CVII, above, and presumably from Aldeburgh Hatch. "The Lady of the Jewel" (obviously "the Diamond Lady" of CVII) remains a mystery. Apparently she had placed her jewels in Donne's keeping, thus charging him with a responsibility which he seems to have found exceedingly irksome.

CXI

Donne was ordained in January, 1615, a "very few days" before the date of this letter.

CXII

This letter may safely be assigned to 1613. Rochester was made Earl of Somerset in December of this year, a few days before his marriage to Lady Frances Howard. Surely none of the letters to Somerset for which Sir Francis Bacon has been so severely condemned expresses a more complete submission than is here offered.

CXIV

To George Gerrard. Probably written from France, and, if so, presumably to be assigned to 1612, when Donne was in Paris with Sir Robert Drury. "This book of French *Satyrs*" Mr. Gosse takes to be the first authoritative edition of Regnier's *Satyres et autres œuvres folastres*, 1612.

CXV

The allusion to Pierre du Moulin, the French theologian, who preached before the Court in June, 1615, gives the approximate date of this letter. Sir Thomas Grymes, the husband of Donne's sister Jane, we have already met. Donne says *father-in-law* where we should say *step-father*.

CXVI

Sir Dudley Carleton remained as Ambassador to Venice until 1616, when he was succeeded by Sir Henry Wotton, but this letter must have been written before Donne's ordination in January, 1615. "My Lord" is, of course, the Earl of Somerset.

CXVII

This, and the next letter, may belong to the same period as the preceding letter to Sir Robert Ker. "*Monte Magor*" is George de Montemayor, whose "Shepherdess Felismena," in the Spanish pastoral romance of "Diana," tells the same story as "The Two Gentlemen of Verona." A translation into English by Bartholomew Yonge was published in 1598, but Donne may have read it in the original.

CXIX

On November 4, 1616, Charles, the Duke of York, was created Prince of Wales.

CXX

This letter, like CXVI, seems to belong to the period immediately preceding Donne's entrance into the church, when Sir Robert Ker's advice as to the best way of retaining Somerset's interest was constantly in request.

CXXI

To George Gerrard, and belonging to the winter of 1612-13. Cf. XCI, which also carried an enclosure. The letter enclosed with the present letter may have been addressed to Lord Clifford (Cf. CVI) or, more probably, to Rochester.

CXXII

This and the next two letters were written in April, 1627, and relate to the same incident. This letter is the first, and the next the last of the series.

Dr. Richard Montagu, who had been chaplain to James I, was the highest of high-churchmen, and a believer in the doctrine of the divine right of kings in its extreme form. He is said to have looked upon reunion with the Roman church as quite possible. In the ecclesiastical politics of the time he was an ardent supporter of Laud, then Bishop of Bath and Wells. In the early part of 1627 Montagu published his *Apello Cæsarem*, in spite of the opposition of Archbishop Abbot, who had refused to license it. Abbot thereupon instigated an attack on Montagu in the House of Commons. Montagu was committed to the custody of the serjeant-at-arms, and the House petitioned the King for his punishment. Charles not only refused his consent, but marked his resentment of the attitude of Archbishop Abbot and the Commons by making Montagu Bishop of Chichester. Abbot returned to the charge in a sermon which gave the King great offense. At this juncture Donne was appointed to preach before the court. Laud was present and seems to have thought, and to have persuaded the King, that Donne's sermon indicated sympathy with Abbot, whose break with the King was now open. At any rate Laud directed Donne to send a copy of his sermon to the King.

The letters tell the rest of the story so far as Donne is concerned. Abbot, on his refusal to license Dr. Sibthorpe's sermon, *Apostolical Obedience*, was deprived of his archiepiscopal authority, which was given to a commission of five bishops.

CXXIII

As Donne was born and bred in the Roman church, this reference to the religion he was born in, is explicable only if we understand Donne to be thinking of the Anglican and Roman communions as branches of one Catholic Church, divided in government, but spiritually one.

CXXIV

There is in the British Museum a copy of Donne's *Poems*, 1633, which belonged to Charles I, and which contains MS. notes in his hand. "The Bishop" here is Laud; "My Lord Duke" is Buckingham.

CXXV

This letter, and CXXVII, below, which should precede it, relate to the occasion of the delivery of the first of the *Two Sermons Preached before King Charles, upon the xxvi verse of the first Chapter of Genesis*, which stand at the head of Donne's published Sermons. James I died on March 27th, 1625. One week later, Donne, at the command of the new King, preached at the Court. His extreme nervousness and almost painful diffidence are clearly implied in these two letters to Sir Robert Ker.

CXXVI

I am unable to give any satisfactory account of this letter. The form of the address indicates that it was written not earlier than 1625 when Ker became Master of the Privy Purse. "My great neighbour" may possibly be "the B" of CXXVIII.

CXXVIII

"The B" to whom allusion is here made, is George Montaigne, Bishop of London since 1621, and a prominent member of the party of which Laud, now Bishop of Bath and Wells, was already the leader. In 1628 Montaigne's witty suggestion that the King had power to throw "this mountain" into the see of York was rewarded by his appointment as Archbishop of York, Laud succeeding him as Bishop of London. Montaigne warmly defended Montagu against the attacks of Archbishop Abbot. (See note to CXXII, above.)

CXXIX

This letter, written less than two weeks before his death, is addressed to one of the most intimate of the friends of Donne's later life. Mrs. Thomas Cokain, or Cokayne, had been abandoned by her husband, who left her with a houseful of children, at Ashbourne, the Derbyshire estate of the Cokaynes, and went to London where the rest of his life was spent in the compilation of an English-Greek lexicon, which was finally published in 1658, twenty years after his death.

Donne lived long enough to perform the Lenten service of which he writes. On February 12th, 1631, he preached at Court the last and most famous of his sermons, *Deaths Duell, or, A Consolation to the Soule, against the Dying Life, and living Death of the Body, Delivered in a Sermon at White-Hall, before the KINGS MAIESTIE, in the beginning of Lent, 1630, By that late Learned and Reverend Divine,* John Donne, *Dr. in Divinity, and Deane of S. Pauls, London.*

The Biographies

Donne in his middle years

THE LIFE OF DR. JOHN DONNE by Izaak Walton

Izaak Walton (1593–1683) was an English writer. Although most famous now for his book *The Compleat Angler*, he also wrote a number of short biographies that have been collected under the title of *Walton's Lives*. He was born at Stafford and his father was an innkeeper. As an adult, Walton settled in London where he began trading as an ironmonger in a small shop in the upper story of Thomas Gresham's Royal Burse or Exchange in Cornhill. In 1614 he had a shop in Fleet Street, two doors west of Chancery Lane in the parish of St Dunstan's. At about this time he met and became friends with John Donne, who was the vicar of the parish church.

After the Royalist defeat at Marston Moor in 1644, Walton retired from his trade. He went to live just north of his birthplace, at a place between the town of Stafford and the town of Stone, where he had bought some land edged by the river. His new land at Shallowford (now a museum in his honour) included a farm, and a parcel of land. But by 1650 he was again living in Clerkenwell, London.

The full title of Walton's book of short biographies is *Lives of John Donne, Henry Wotton, Rich'd Hooker, George Herbert, &C.* His leisurely labours as a biographer seem to have grown out of his devotion to angling. It was probably as a keen angler that he made the acquaintance of Sir Henry Wotton, who had intended to write the life of John Donne himself, having already corresponded with Walton on the subject, but he eventually resigned the task to his fellow angler. Walton had already contributed an Elegy to the 1633 edition of Donne's poems, and he completed and published the following biography in 1640, receiving favourable reviews from contemporary critics.

Izaak Walton

Izaak Walton's house at 120 Chancery Lane, which he occupied from 1627 to 1644

THE LIFE OF DR. JOHN DONNE

Master John Donne was born in London, in the year 1573, of good and virtuous parents: and, though his own learning and other multiplied merits may justly appear sufficient to dignify both himself and his posterity, yet the reader may be pleased to know that his father was masculinely and lineally descended from a very ancient family in Wales, where many of his name now live, that deserve and have great reputation in that country.

By his mother he was descended of the family of the famous and learned Sir Thomas More, sometime Lord Chancellor of England: as also, from that worthy and laborious Judge Rastall, who left posterity the vast Statutes of the Law of this nation most exactly abridged.

He had his first breeding in his father’s house, where a private tutor had the care of him, until the tenth year of his age; and, in his eleventh year, was sent to the University of Oxford, having at that time a good command both of the French and Latin tongue. This, and some other of his remarkable abilities, made one then give this censure of him: That this age had brought forth another Picus Mirandula; of whom story says, that he was rather born than made wise by study.

There he remained for some years in Hart Hall, having, for the advancement of his studies, tutors of several sciences to attend and instruct him, till time made him capable, and his learning expressed in public exercises, declared him worthy, to receive his first degree in the schools, which he forbore by advice from his friends, who, being for their religion of the Romish persuasion, were conscionably averse to some parts of the oath that is always tendered at those times, and not to be refused by those that expect the titulary honour of their studies.

About the fourteenth year of his age he was transplanted from Oxford to Cambridge, where, that he might receive nourishment from both soils, he staid till his seventeenth year; all which time he was a most laborious student, often changing his studies, but endeavouring to take no degree, for the reasons formerly mentioned.

About the seventeenth year of his age he was removed to London, and then admitted into Lincoln’s Inn, with an intent to study the law, where he gave great testimonies of his wit, his learning, and of his improvement in

that profession; which never served him for other use than an ornament and self-satisfaction.

His father died before his admission into this society; and, being a merchant, left him his portion in money. (It was £3,000.) His mother, and those to whose care he was committed, were watchful to improve his knowledge, and to that end appointed him tutors both in the mathematics, and in all the other liberal sciences, to attend him. But, with these arts, they were advised to instil into him particular principles of the Romish Church; of which those tutors professed, though secretly, themselves to be members.

They had almost obliged him to their faith; having for their advantage, besides many opportunities, the example of his dear and pious parents, which was a most powerful persuasion, and did work much upon him, as he professeth in his preface to his "Pseudo-Martyr," a book of which the reader shall have some account in what follows.

He was now entered into the eighteenth year of his age; and at that time had betrothed himself to no religion that might give him any other denomination than a Christian. And reason and piety had both persuaded him that there could be no such sin as schism, if an adherence to some visible Church were not necessary.

About the nineteenth year of his age, he, being then unresolved what religion to adhere to, and considering how much it concerned his soul to choose the most orthodox, did therefore, — though his youth and health promised him a long life — to rectify all scruples that might concern that, presently lay aside all study of the law, and of all other sciences that might give him a denomination; and began seriously to survey and consider the body of Divinity, as it was then controverted betwixt the Reformed and the Roman Church. And, as God's blessed Spirit did then awaken him to the search, and in that industry did never forsake him — they be his own words (in his preface to "Pseudo-Martyr") — so he calls the same Holy Spirit to witness this protestation; that in that disquisition and search he proceeded with humility and diffidence in himself; and by that which he took to be the safest way; namely, frequent prayers, and an indifferent affection to both parties; and, indeed, Truth had too much light about her to be hid from so sharp an inquirer; and he had too much ingenuity not to acknowledge he had found her.

Being to undertake this search, he believed the Cardinal Bellarmine to be the best defender of the Roman cause, and therefore betook himself to the

examination of his reasons. The cause was weighty, and wilful delays had been inexcusable both towards God and his own conscience: he therefore proceeded in this search with all moderate haste, and about the twentieth year of his age did show the then Dean of Gloucester — whose name my memory hath now lost — all the Cardinal's works marked with many weighty observations under his own hand; which works were bequeathed by him, at his death, as a legacy to a most dear friend.

About a year following he resolved to travel: and the Earl of Essex going first to Cales, and after the Island voyages, the first anno 1596, the second 1597, he took the advantage of those opportunities, waited upon his Lordship, and was an eye-witness of those happy and unhappy employments.

But he returned not back into England till he had staid some years, first in Italy and then in Spain, where he made many useful observations of those countries, their laws and manner of government, and returned perfect in their languages.

The time that he spent in Spain was, at his first going into Italy, designed for travelling to the Holy Land, and for viewing Jerusalem and the Sepulchre of our Saviour. But at his being in the furthest parts of Italy, the disappointment of company, or of a safe convoy, or the uncertainty of returns of money into those remote parts, denied him that happiness, which he did often occasionally mention with a deploration.

Not long after his return into England, that exemplary pattern of gravity and wisdom, the Lord Ellesmere, then Keeper of the Great Seal, the Lord Chancellor of England, taking notice of his learning, languages, and other abilities, and much affecting his person and behaviour, took him to be his chief secretary; supposing and intending it to be an introduction to some more weighty employment in the State; for which, his Lordship did often protest, he thought him very fit.

Nor did his Lordship, in this time of Master Donne's attendance upon him, account him to be so much his servant as to forget he was his friend; and, to testify it, did always use him with much courtesy, appointing him a place at his own table, to which he esteemed his company and discourse to be a great ornament.

He continued that employment for the space of five years, being daily useful, and not mercenary to his friend. During which time he — I dare not say unhappily — fell into such a liking, as, — with her approbation, —

increased into a love, with a young gentlewoman that lived in that family, who was niece to the Lady Ellesmere, and daughter to Sir George More, then Chancellor of the Garter and Lieutenant of the Tower.

Sir George had some intimation of it, and, knowing prevention to be a great part of wisdom, did therefore remove her with much haste from that to his own house at Lothesley, in the County of Surrey; but too late, by reason of some faithful promises which were so interchangeably passed, as never to be violated by either party.

These promises were only known to themselves; and the friends of both parties used much diligence, and many arguments, to kill or cool their affections to each other; but in vain, for love is a flattering mischief that hath denied aged and wise men a foresight of those evils that too often prove to be the children of that blind father; a passion that carries us to commit errors with as much ease as whirlwinds move feathers, and begets in us an unwearied industry to the attainment of what we desire. And such an industry did, notwithstanding much watchfulness against it, bring them secretly together, — I forbear to tell the manner how, — and at last to a marriage too, without the allowance of those friends whose approbation always was, and ever will be necessary, to make even a virtuous love become lawful.

And that the knowledge of their marriage might not fall, like an unexpected tempest, on those that were unwilling to have it so; and that pre-apprehensions might make it the less enormous when it was known, it was purposely whispered into the ears of many that it was so, yet by none that could affirm it. But, to put a period to the jealousies of Sir George — doubt often begetting more restless thoughts than the certain knowledge of what we fear — the news was, in favour to Mr. Donne, and with his allowance, made known to Sir George, by his honourable friend and neighbour Henry, Earl of Northumberland; but it was to Sir George so immeasurably unwelcome, and so transported him that, as though his passion of anger and inconsideration might exceed theirs of love and error, he presently engaged his sister, the Lady Ellesmere, to join with him to procure her lord to discharge Mr. Donne of the place he held under his Lordship. This request was followed with violence; and though Sir George were remembered that errors might be over punished, and desired therefore to forbear till second considerations might clear some scruples, yet he became restless until his suit was granted and the punishment executed. And though the Lord

Chancellor did not, at Mr. Donne's dismission, give him such a commendation as the great Emperor Charles the Fifth did of his Secretary Eraso, when he parted with him to his son and successor, Philip the Second, saying, "That in his Eraso, he gave to him a greater gift than all his estate, and all the kingdoms which he then resigned to him;" yet the Lord Chancellor said, "He parted with a friend, and such a Secretary as was fitter to serve a king than a subject."

Immediately after his dismission from his service, he sent a sad letter to his wife to acquaint her with it; and after the subscription of his name, writ,

"John Donne, Anne Donne, Un-done;"

and God knows it proved too true; for this bitter physic of Mr. Donne's dismission, was not enough to purge out all Sir George's choler, for he was not satisfied till Mr. Donne and his sometime compupil in Cambridge, that married him, namely, Samuel Brooke, who was after Doctor in Divinity and Master of Trinity College — and his brother Mr. Christopher Brooke, sometime Mr. Donne's chamber-fellow in Lincoln's Inn, who gave Mr. Donne his wife, and witnessed the marriage, were all committed to three several prisons.

Mr. Donne was first enlarged, who neither gave rest to his body or brain, nor to any friend in whom he might hope to have an interest, until he had procured an enlargement for his two imprisoned friends.

He was now at liberty, but his days were still cloudy; and, being past these troubles, others did still multiply upon him; for his wife was — to her extreme sorrow — detained from him; and though, with Jacob, he endured not a hard service for her, yet he lost a good one, and was forced to make good his title, and to get possession of her by a long and restless suit in law, which proved troublesome and sadly chargeable to him, whose youth, and travel, and needless bounty, had brought his estate into a narrow compass.

It is observed, and most truly, that silence and submission are charming qualities, and work most upon passionate men; and it proved so with Sir George; for these, and a general report of Mr. Donne's merits, together with his winning behaviour, — which, when it would entice, had a strange kind of elegant irresistible art; — these, and time, had so dispassionated Sir George, that, as the world had approved his daughter's choice, so he also could not but see a more than ordinary merit in his new son; and this at last melted him into so much remorse — for love and anger are so like agues as to have hot and cold fits; and love in parents, though it may be quenched,

yet is easily rekindled, and expires not till death denies mankind a natural heat — that he laboured his son's restoration to his place; using to that end both his own and his sister's power to her lord; but with no success; for his answer was, "That though he was unfeignedly sorry for what he had done, yet it was inconsistent with his place and credit, to discharge and readmit servants at the request of passionate petitioners."

Sir George's endeavour for Mr. Donne's readmission was by all means to be kept secret: — for men do more naturally reluct for errors than submit to put on those blemishes that attend their visible acknowledgment. But, however, it was not long before Sir George appeared to be so far reconciled as to wish their happiness, and not to deny them his paternal blessing, but yet refused to contribute any means that might conduce to their livelihood.

Mr. Donne's estate was the greatest part spent in many and chargeable travels, books, and dear-bought experience: he out of all employment that might yield a support for himself and wife, who had been curiously and plentifully educated; both their natures generous, and accustomed to confer, and not to receive, courtesies, these and other considerations, but chiefly that his wife was to bear a part in his sufferings, surrounded him with many sad thoughts, and some apparent apprehensions of want.

But his sorrows were lessened and his wants prevented by the seasonable courtesy of their noble kinsman, Sir Francis Wolly, of Pirford in Surrey, who intreated them to a cohabitation with him; where they remained with much freedom to themselves, and equal content to Him, for some years; and as their charge increased — she had yearly a child — so did his love and bounty.

Mr. Donne and his wife continued with Sir Francis Wolly till his death: a little before which time Sir Francis was so happy as to make a perfect reconciliation between Sir George and his forsaken son and daughter; Sir George conditioning, by bond, to pay to Mr. Donne 800*l.* at a certain day, as a portion with his wife, or 20*l.* quarterly for their maintenance, as the interest for it, till the said portion was paid.

Most of those years that he lived with Sir Francis he studied the Civil and Canon Laws; in which he acquired such a perfection, as was judged to hold proportion with many, who had made that study the employment of their whole life.

Sir Francis being dead, and that happy family dissolved, Mr. Donne took for himself a house in Mitcham — near to Croydon in Surrey — a place

noted for good air and choice company: there his wife and children remained; and for himself he took lodgings in London, near to Whitehall, whither his friends and occasions drew him very often, and where he was as often visited by many of the nobility and others of this nation, who used him in their counsels of greatest consideration, and with some rewards for his better subsistence.

Nor did our own nobility only value and favour him, but his acquaintance and friendship was sought for by most Ambassadors of foreign nations, and by many other strangers whose learning or business occasioned their stay in this nation.

Thus it continued with him for about two years, all which time his family remained constantly at Mitcham; and to which place he often retired himself, and destined some days to a constant study of some points of controversy betwixt the English and Roman Church, and especially those of Supremacy and Allegiance: and to that place and such studies he could willingly have wedded himself during his life; but the earnest persuasion of friends became at last to be so powerful, as to cause the removal of himself and family to London, where Sir Robert Drewry, a gentleman of a very noble estate, and a more liberal mind, assigned him and his wife an useful apartment in his own large house in Drury Lane, and not only rent free, but was also a cherisher of his studies, and such a friend as sympathized with him and his, in all their joy and sorrows.

At this time of Mr. Donne’s and his wife’s living in Sir Robert’s house, the Lord Hay was, by King James, sent upon a glorious embassy to the then French King, Henry the Fourth; and Sir Robert put on a sudden resolution to accompany him to the French Court, and to be present at his audience there. And Sir Robert put on a sudden resolution to solicit Mr. Donne to be his companion in that journey. And this desire was suddenly made known to his wife, who was then with child, and otherwise under so dangerous a habit of body as to her health, that she professed an unwillingness to allow him any absence from her; saying, “Her divining soul boded her some ill in his absence;” and therefore desired him not to leave her. This made Mr. Donne lay aside all thoughts of the journey, and really to resolve against it. But Sir Robert became restless in his persuasions for it, and Mr. Donne was so generous as to think he had sold his liberty when he received so many charitable kindnesses from him, and told his wife so; who did therefore, with an unwilling willingness, give a faint consent to the journey, which

was proposed to be but for two months; for about that time they determined their return. Within a few days after this resolve, the Ambassador, Sir Robert, and Mr. Donne, left London; and were the twelfth day got all safe to Paris. Two days after their arrival there, Mr. Donne was left alone in that room in which Sir Robert, and he, and some other friends had dined together. To this place Sir Robert returned within half an hour; and as he left, so he found, Mr. Donne alone; but in such an ecstasy, and so altered as to his looks, as amazed Sir Robert to behold him; insomuch that he earnestly desired Mr. Donne to declare what had befallen him in the short time of his absence. To which Mr. Donne was not able to make a present answer; but, after a long and perplexed pause, did at last say, “I have seen a dreadful vision since I saw you: I have seen my dear wife pass twice by me through this room, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms: this I have seen since I saw you.” To which Sir Robert replied, “Sure, sir, you have slept since I saw you; and this is the result of some melancholy dream, which I desire you to forget, for you are now awake.” To which Mr. Donne’s reply was: “I cannot be surer that I now live than that I have not slept since I saw you: and am as sure that at her second appearing she stopped and looked me in the face, and vanished.” Rest and sleep had not altered Mr. Donne’s opinion the next day: for he then affirmed this vision with a more deliberate, and so confirmed a confidence, that he inclined Sir Robert to a faint belief that the vision was true. It is truly said that desire and doubt have no rest; and it proved so with Sir Robert; for he immediately sent a servant to Drewry House, with a charge to hasten back and bring him word whether Mrs. Donne were alive; and, if alive, in what condition she was as to her health. The twelfth day the messenger returned with this account: — That he found and left Mrs. Donne very sad and sick in her bed; and that, after a long and dangerous labour, she had been delivered of a dead child. And, upon examination, the abortion proved to be the same day, and about the very hour, that Mr. Donne affirmed he saw her pass by him in his chamber.

This is a relation that will beget some wonder, and it well may; for most of our world are at present possessed with an opinion that visions and miracles are ceased. And, though it is most certain that two lutes, being both strung and tuned to an equal pitch, and then one played upon, the other that is not touched, being laid upon a table at a fit distance, will — like an echo to a trumpet — warble a faint audible harmony in answer to the same tune;

yet many will not believe there is any such thing as a sympathy of souls; and I am well pleased that every reader do enjoy his own opinion. But if the unbelieving will not allow the believing reader of this story, a liberty to believe that it may be true, then I wish him to consider many wise men have believed that the ghost of Julius Cæsar did appear to Brutus, and that both St. Austin, and Monica his mother, had visions in order to his conversion. And though these and many others — too many to name — have but the authority of human story, yet the incredible reader may find in the sacred story (1 Sam. xxviii. 14) that Samuel did appear to Saul even after his death — whether really or not, I undertake not to determine. And Bildad, in the Book of Job, says these words (iv. 13-16): “A spirit passed before my face; the hair of my head stood up; fear and trembling came upon me, and made all my bones to shake.” Upon which words I will make no comment, but leave them to be considered by the incredulous reader; to whom I will also commend this following consideration: That there be many pious and learned men that believe our merciful God hath assigned to every man a particular guardian angel to be his constant monitor, and to attend him in all his dangers, both of body and soul. And the opinion that every man hath his particular angel may gain some authority by the relation of St. Peter’s miraculous deliverance out of prison (Acts xii. 7-10; 13-15), not by many, but by one angel. And this belief may yet gain more credit by the reader’s considering, that when Peter after his enlargement knocked at the door of Mary the mother of John, and Rhode, the maidservant, being surprised with joy that Peter was there, did not let him in, but ran in haste and told the disciples, who were then and there met together, that Peter was at the door; and they, not believing it, said she was mad: yet, when she again affirmed it, though they then believed it not, yet they concluded, and said, “It is his angel.”

More observations of this nature, and inferences from them, might be made to gain the relation a firmer belief; but I forbear, lest I, that intended to be but a relator, may be thought to be an engaged person for the proving what was related to me; and yet I think myself bound to declare that, though it was not told me by Mr. Donne himself, it was told me — now long since — by a person of honour, and of such intimacy with him, that he knew more of the secrets of his soul than any person then living: and I think he told me the truth; for it was told with such circumstances, and such

asseveration, that — to say nothing of my own thoughts — I verily believe he that told it me did himself believe it to be true.

I return from my account of the vision, to tell the reader, that both before Mr. Donne's going into France, at his being there, and after his return, many of the nobility and others that were powerful at court, were watchful and solicitous to the King for some secular employment for him. The King had formerly both known and put a value upon his company, and had also given him some hopes of a state-employment; being always much pleased when Mr. Donne attended him, especially at his meals, where there were usually many deep discourses of general learning, and very often friendly disputes, or debates of religion, betwixt his Majesty and those divines, whose places required their attendance on him at those times: particularly the Dean of the Chapel, who then was Bishop Montague — the publisher of the learned and eloquent Works of his Majesty — and the most Reverend Doctor Andrews the late learned Bishop of Winchester, who was then the King's Almoner.

About this time there grew many disputes, that concerned the Oath of Supremacy and Allegiance, in which the King had appeared, and engaged himself by his public writings now extant: and his Majesty discoursing with Mr. Donne, concerning many of the reasons which are usually urged against the taking of those Oaths, apprehended such a validity and clearness in his stating the questions, and his answers to them, that his Majesty commanded him to bestow some time in drawing the arguments into a method, and then to write his answers to them; and, having done that, not to send, but be his own messenger, and bring them to him. To this he presently and diligently applied himself, and within six weeks brought them to him under his own handwriting, as they be now printed; the book bearing the name of "Pseudo-Martyr," printed anno 1610.

When the King had read and considered that book, he persuaded Mr. Donne to enter into the Ministry; to which, at that time, he was, and appeared, very unwilling, apprehending it — such was his mistaken modesty — to be too weighty for his abilities.

Such strifes St. Austin had, when St. Ambrose endeavoured his conversion to Christianity; with which he confesseth he acquainted his friend Alipius. Our learned author — a man fit to write after no mean copy — did the like. And declaring his intentions to his dear friend Dr. King, then Bishop of London, a man famous in his generation, and no stranger to Mr. Donne's abilities — for he had been Chaplain to the Lord Chancellor, at

the time of Mr. Donne's being his Lordship's Secretary — that reverend man did receive the news with much gladness; and, after some expressions of joy, and a persuasion to be constant in his pious purpose, he proceeded with all convenient speed to ordain him first Deacon, and then Priest not long after.

Presently after he entered into his holy profession, the King sent for him, and made him his Chaplain in Ordinary, and promised to take a particular care for his preferment.

And, though his long familiarity with scholars and persons of greatest quality was such, as might have given some men boldness enough to have preached to any eminent auditory; yet his modesty in this employment was such, that he could not be persuaded to it, but went usually accompanied with some one friend to preach privately in some village, not far from London; his first sermon being preached at Paddington. This he did, till his Majesty sent and appointed him a day to preach to him at Whitehall; and, though much were expected from him, both by his Majesty and others, yet he was so happy — which few are — as to satisfy and exceed their expectations: preaching the Word so, as shewed his own heart was possessed with those very thoughts and joys that he laboured to distil into others: a preacher in earnest; weeping sometimes for his auditory, sometimes with them; always preaching to himself like an angel from a cloud, but in none; carrying some, as St. Paul was, to Heaven in holy raptures, and enticing others by a sacred art and courtship to amend their lives: here picturing a vice so as to make it ugly to those that practised it; and a virtue so as to make it beloved, even by those that loved it not; and all this with a most particular grace and an unexpressible addition of comeliness.

That summer, in the very same month in which he entered into sacred Orders, and was made the King's Chaplain, his Majesty then going his progress, was entreated to receive an entertainment in the University of Cambridge: and Mr. Donne attending his Majesty at that time, his Majesty was pleased to recommend him to the University, to be made Doctor in Divinity; Doctor Harsnett, after Archbishop of York, was then Vice-Chancellor, who, knowing him to be the author of that learned book the "Pseudo-Martyr," required no other proof of his abilities, but proposed it to the University, who presently assented, and expressed a gladness that they had such an occasion to entitle him to be theirs.

His abilities and industry in his profession were so eminent, and he so known and so beloved by persons of quality, that within the first year of his entering into sacred Orders, he had fourteen advowsons of several benefices presented to him: but they were in the country, and he could not leave his beloved London, to which place he had a natural inclination, having received both his birth and education in it, and there contracted a friendship with many, whose conversation multiplied the joys of his life; but an employment that might affix him to that place would be welcome, for he needed it.

Immediately after his return from Cambridge his wife died, leaving him a man of a narrow, unsettled estate, and — having buried five — the careful father of seven children then living, to whom he gave a voluntary assurance never to bring them under the subjection of a step-mother; which promise he kept most faithfully, burying with his tears all his earthly joys in his most dear and deserving wife's grave, and betook himself to a most retired and solitary life.

In this retiredness, which was often from the sight of his dearest friends, he became crucified to the world, and all those vanities, those imaginary pleasures, that are daily acted on that restless stage, and they were as perfectly crucified to him.

His first motion from his house was to preach where his beloved wife lay buried — in St. Clement's Church, near Temple Bar, London; and his text was a part of the Prophet Jeremy's Lamentation: "Lo, I am the man that have seen affliction."

In this time of sadness he was importuned by the grave Benchers of Lincoln's Inn — who were once the companions and friends of his youth — to accept of their Lecture, which, by reason of Dr. Gataker's removal from thence, was then void; of which he accepted, being most glad to renew his intermitted friendship with those whom he so much loved, and where he had been a Saul, — though not to persecute Christianity, or to deride it, yet in his irregular youth to neglect the visible practice of it, — there to become a Paul, and preach salvation to his beloved brethren.

About which time the Emperor of Germany died, and the Palsgrave, who had lately married the Lady Elizabeth, the King's only daughter, was elected and crowned King of Bohemia, the unhappy beginning of many miseries in that nation.

King James, whose motto — *Beati pacifici* — did truly speak the very thoughts of his heart, endeavoured first to prevent, and after to compose, the discords of that discomposed State; and, amongst other his endeavours, did then send the Lord Hay, Earl of Doncaster, his Ambassador to those unsettled Princes; and, by a special command from his Majesty, Dr. Donne was appointed to assist and attend that employment to the Princes of the Union, for which the Earl was most glad, who had always put a great value on him, and taken a great pleasure in his conversation and discourse: and his friends at Lincoln's Inn were as glad; for they feared that his immoderate study, and sadness for his wife's death, would, as Jacob said, "make his days few," and, respecting his bodily health, "evil" too: and of this there were many visible signs.

About fourteen months after his departure out of England, he returned to his friends of Lincoln's Inn, with his sorrows moderated, and his health improved; and there betook himself to his constant course of preaching.

About a year after his return out of Germany, Dr. Carey was made Bishop of Exeter, and by his removal, the Deanery of St. Paul's being vacant, the King sent to Dr. Donne, and appointed him to attend him at dinner the next day. When his Majesty was sat down, before he had eat any meat, he said after his pleasant manner, "Dr. Donne, I have invited you to dinner; and, though you sit not down with me, yet I will carve to you of a dish that I know you love well; for, knowing you love London, I do therefore make you Dean of St. Paul's; and, when I have dined, then do you take your beloved dish home to your study, say grace there to yourself, and much good may it do you."

Immediately after he came to his Deanery, he employed workmen to repair and beautify the Chapel; suffering as holy David once vowed, "his eyes and temples to take no rest till he had first beautified the house of God."

The next quarter following when his father-in-law, Sir George More, — whom time had made a lover and admirer of him — came to pay to him the conditioned sum of twenty pounds, he refused to receive it; and said — as good Jacob did, when he heard his beloved son Joseph was alive — "'It is enough;' you have been kind to me and mine: I know your present condition is such as not to abound, and I hope mine is, or will be such as not to need it: I will therefore receive no more from you upon that contract," and in testimony of it freely gave him up his bond.

Immediately after his admission into his Deanery the Vicarage of St. Dunstan in the West, London, fell to him by the death of Dr. White, the advowson of it having been given to him long before by his honourable friend Richard Earl of Dorset, then the patron, and confirmed by his brother the late deceased Edward, both of them men of much honour.

By these, and another ecclesiastical endowment which fell to him about the same time, given to him formerly by the Earl of Kent, he was enabled to become charitable to the poor, and kind to his friends, and to make such provision for his children, that they were not left scandalous as relating to their or his profession and quality.

The next Parliament, which was within that present year, he was chosen Prolocutor to the Convocation, and about that time was appointed by his Majesty, his most gracious master, to preach very many occasional sermons, as at St. Paul's Cross, and other places. All which employments he performed to the admiration of the representative body of the whole Clergy of this nation.

He was once, and but once, clouded with the King's displeasure, and it was about this time; which was occasioned by some malicious whisperer, who had told his Majesty that Dr. Donne had put on the general humour of the pulpits, and was become busy in insinuating a fear of the King's inclining to popery, and a dislike of his government; and particularly for the King's then turning the evening lectures into catechising, and expounding the Prayer of our Lord, and of the Belief, and Commandments. His Majesty was the more inclinable to believe this, for that a person of nobility and great note, betwixt whom and Dr. Donne there had been a great friendship, was at this very time discarded the court — I shall forbear his name, unless I had a fairer occasion — and justly committed to prison; which begot many rumours in the common people, who in this nation think they are not wise unless they be busy about what they understand not, and especially about religion.

The King received this news with so much discontent and restlessness that he would not suffer the sun to set and leave him under this doubt; but sent for Dr. Donne, and required his answer to the accusation; which was so clear and satisfactory that the King said, "he was right glad he rested no longer under the suspicion." When the King had said this, Dr. Donne kneeled down, and thanked his Majesty, and protested his answer was faithful, and free from all collusion, and therefore "desired that he might not

rise till, as in like cases, he always had from God, so he might have from his Majesty, some assurance that he stood clear and fair in his opinion." At which the King raised him from his knees with his own hands, and "protested he believed him; and that he knew he was an honest man, and doubted not but that he loved him truly." And, having thus dismissed him, he called some Lords of his Council into his chamber, and said with much earnestness, "My Doctor is an honest man; and, my Lords, I was never better satisfied with an answer than he hath now made me; and I always rejoice when I think that by my means he became a Divine."

He was made Dean in the fiftieth year of his age, and in his fifty-fourth year a dangerous sickness seized him, which inclined him to a consumption; but God, as Job thankfully acknowledged, preserved his spirit, and kept his intellectuals as clear and perfect as when that sickness first seized his body; but it continued long, and threatened him with death, which he dreaded not.

Within a few days his distempers abated; and as his strength increased so did his thankfulness to Almighty God, testified in his most excellent "Book of Devotions," which he published at his recovery; in which the reader may see the most secret thoughts that then possessed his soul, paraphrased and made public: a book that may not unfitly be called a Sacred Picture of Spiritual Ecstasies, occasioned and applicable to the emergencies of that sickness; which book, being a composition of meditations, disquisitions, and prayers, he writ on his sick-bed; herein imitating the holy Patriarchs, who were wont to build their altars in that place where they had received their blessings.

This sickness brought him so near to the gates of death, and he saw the grave so ready to devour him, that he would often say his recovery was supernatural: but that God that then restored his health continued it to him till the fifty-ninth year of his life: and then, in August 1630, being with his eldest daughter, Mrs. Harvey, at Abury Hatch, in Essex, he there fell into a fever, which, with the help of his constant infirmity — vapours from the spleen — hastened him into so visible a consumption that his beholders might say, as St. Paul of himself, "He dies daily;" and he might say with Job, "My welfare passeth away as a cloud, the days of my affliction have taken hold of me, and weary nights are appointed for me."

Reader, this sickness continued long, not only weakening, but wearying him so much, that my desire is he may now take some rest; and that before I speak of his death thou wilt not think it an impertinent digression to look

back with me upon some observations of his life, which, whilst a gentle slumber gives rest to his spirits, may, I hope, not unfitly, exercise thy consideration.

His marriage was the remarkable error of his life; an error which, though he had a wit able and very apt to maintain paradoxes, yet he was very far from justifying it: and though his wife's competent years, and other reasons, might be justly urged to moderate severe censures, yet he would occasionally condemn himself for it: and doubtless it had been attended with an heavy repentance, if God had not blessed them with so mutual and cordial affections, as in the midst of their sufferings made their bread of sorrow taste more pleasantly than the banquets of dull and low-spirited people.

The recreations of his youth were poetry, in which he was so happy as if nature and all her varieties had been made only to exercise his sharp wit and high fancy; and in those pieces which were facetiously composed and carelessly scattered, — most of them being written before the twentieth year of his age — it may appear by his choice metaphors that both nature and all the arts joined to assist him with their utmost skill.

It is a truth, that in his penitential years, viewing some of those pieces that had been loosely — God knows, too loosely — scattered in his youth, he wished they had been abortive, or so short-lived that his own eyes had witnessed their funerals; but, though he was no friend to them, he was not so fallen out with heavenly poetry, as to forsake that; no, not in his declining age; witnessed then by many divine sonnets, and other high, holy, and harmonious composures. Yea, even on his former sick-bed he wrote this heavenly hymn, expressing the great joy that then possessed his soul, in the assurance of God's favour to him when he composed it: —

"AN HYMN

"TO GOD THE FATHER

"Wilt Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,

For I have more.
“Wilt Thou forgive that sin, which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two: — but wallow’d in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.
“I have a sin of fear, that when I’ve spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine as He shines now, and heretofore;
And having done that, Thou hast done,
I fear no more.”

I have the rather mentioned this hymn, for that he caused it to be set to a most grave and solemn tune, and to be often sung to the organ by the choiristers of St. Paul’s Church, in his own hearing; especially at the Evening Service; and at his return from his customary devotions in that place, did occasionally say to a friend, “the words of this hymn have restored to me the same thoughts of joy that possessed my soul in my sickness, when I composed it. And, O the power of church-music! that harmony added to this hymn has raised the affections of my heart, and quickened my graces of zeal and gratitude; and I observe that I always return from paying this public duty of prayer and praise to God, with an unexpressible tranquillity of mind, and a willingness to leave the world.”

After this manner did the disciples of our Saviour, and the best of Christians in those ages of the Church nearest to His time, offer their praises to Almighty God. And the reader of St. Augustine’s life may there find, that towards his dissolution he wept abundantly, that the enemies of Christianity had broke in upon them, and profaned and ruined their sanctuaries, and because their public hymns and lauds were lost out of their Churches. And after this manner have many devout souls lifted up their hands and offered acceptable sacrifices unto Almighty God, where Dr. Donne offered his, and now lies buried.

But now , Oh Lord! how is that place become desolate!

Before I proceed further, I think fit to inform the reader, that not long before his death he caused to be drawn a figure of the Body of Christ

extended upon an anchor, like those which painters draw, when they would present us with the picture of Christ crucified on the cross: his varying no otherwise than to affix Him not to a cross, but to an anchor — the emblem of Hope; — this he caused to be drawn in little, and then many of those figures thus drawn to be engraven very small in Heliotropium stones, and set in gold; and of these he sent to many of his dearest friends, to be used as seals, or rings, and kept as memorials of him, and of his affection to them.

His dear friends and benefactors, Sir Henry Goodier and Sir Robert Drewry, could not be of that number; nor could the Lady Magdalen Herbert, the mother of George Herbert, for they had put off mortality, and taken possession of the grave before him; but Sir Henry Wotton, and Dr. Hall, the then — late deceased — Bishop of Norwich, were; and so were Dr. Duppa, Bishop of Salisbury, and Dr. Henry King, Bishop of Chichester — lately deceased — men, in whom there was such a commixture of general learning, of natural eloquence, and Christian humility, that they deserve a commemoration by a pen equal to their own, which none have exceeded.

And in this enumeration of his friends, though many must be omitted, yet that man of primitive piety, Mr. George Herbert, may not; I mean that George Herbert, who was the author of "The Temple, or Sacred Poems and Ejaculations." A book, in which by declaring his own spiritual conflicts, he hath comforted and raised many a dejected and discomposed soul, and charmed them into sweet and quiet thoughts; a book, by the frequent reading whereof, and the assistance of that Spirit that seemed to inspire the author, the reader may attain habits of peace and piety, and all the gifts of the Holy Ghost and Heaven: and may, by still reading, still keep those sacred fires burning upon the altar of so pure a heart, as shall free it from the anxieties of this world, and keep it fixed upon things that are above. Betwixt this George Herbert and Dr. Donne, there was a long and dear friendship, made up by such a sympathy of inclinations that they coveted and joyed to be in each other's company; and this happy friendship was still maintained by many sacred endearments; of which that which followeth may be some testimony.

"TO MR. GEORGE HERBERT;

"SENT HIM WITH ONE OF MY SEALS OF THE ANCHOR AND CHRIST.

“A Sheaf of Snakes used heretofore to be my Seal, which is the Crest of our poor family.”

“Qui prius assuetus serpentum falce tabellas
Signare, hæc nostræ symbola parva domus,
Adscitus domui Domini — —
“Adopted in God’s family, and so
My old coat lost, into new Arms I go.
The Cross, my Seal in Baptism, spread below,
Does by that form into an Anchor grow.
Crosses grow Anchors, bear as thou shouldst do
Thy Cross, and that Cross grows an Anchor too.
But He that makes our Crosses Anchors thus,
Is Christ, who there is crucified for us.
Yet with this I may my first Serpents hold; —
God gives new blessings, and yet leaves the old —
The Serpent, may, as wise, my pattern be;
My poison, as he feeds on dust, that’s me.
And, as he rounds the earth to murder, sure
He is my death; but on the Cross, my cure,
Crucify nature then; and then implore
All grace from Him, crucified there before.
When all is Cross, and that Cross Anchor grown
This Seal’s a Catechism, not a Seal alone.
Under that little Seal great gifts I send,
Both works and pray’rs, pawns and fruits of a friend.
O! may that Saint that rides on our Great Seal,
To you that bear his name, large bounty deal.
“John Donne.”

“IN SACRAM ANCHORAM PISCATORIS

“GEORGE HERBERT.

“Quod Crux nequibat fixa clavique additi, —
Tenere Christum scilicet ne ascenderet,
Tuive Christum —
“Although the Cross could not here Christ detain,
When nail’d unto’t, but He ascends again;
Nor yet thy eloquence here keep Him still,
But only whilst thou speak’st — this Anchor will:
Nor canst thou be content, unless thou to
This certain Anchor add a Seal; and so
The water and the earth both unto thee
Do owe the symbol of their certainty.
Let the world reel, we and all ours stand sure,
This holy cable’s from all storms secure.
“George Herbert.”

I return to tell the reader, that, besides these verses to his dear Mr. Herbert, and that Hymn that I mentioned to be sung in the choir of St. Paul’s Church, he did also shorten and beguile many sad hours by composing other sacred ditties; and he writ an Hymn on his death-bed, which bears this title: —

“AN HYMN TO GOD, MY GOD, IN MY SICKNESS.

“March 23, 1630.

“Since I am coming to that holy room,
Where, with Thy Choir of Saints, for evermore
I shall be made Thy music, as I come
I tune my instrument here at the door,
And, what I must do then, think here before.
“Since my Physicians by their loves are grown
Cosmographers; and I their map, who lie
Flat on this bed — —
“So, in His purple wrapt, receive my Lord!
By these His thorns, give me His other Crown
And, as to other souls I preach’d Thy word,
Be this my text, my sermon to mine own,

‘That He may raise; therefore the Lord throws down.’“

If these fall under the censure of a soul, whose too much mixture with earth makes it unfit to judge of these high raptures and illuminations, let him know, that many holy and devout men have thought the soul of Prudentius to be most refined, when, not many days before his death, “he charged it to present his God each morning and evening with a new and spiritual song;” justified by the example of King David and the good King Hezekiah, who, upon the renovation of his years paid his thankful vows to Almighty God in a royal hymn, which he concludes in these words: “The Lord was ready to save; therefore I will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of my life in the Temple of my God.”

The latter part of his life may be said to be a continued study; for as he usually preached once a week, if not oftener, so after his sermon he never gave his eyes rest, till he had chosen out a new text, and that night cast his sermon into a form, and his text into divisions; and the next day betook himself to consult the Fathers, and so commit his meditations to his memory, which was excellent. But upon Saturday he usually gave himself and his mind a rest from the weary burthen of his week’s meditations, and usually spent that day in visitation of friends, or some other diversions of his thoughts; and would say, “that he gave both his body and mind that refreshment, that he might be enabled to do the work of the day following, not faintly, but with courage and cheerfulness.”

Nor was his age only so industrious, but in the most unsettled days of his youth, his bed was not able to detain him beyond the hour of four in a morning; and it was no common business that drew him out of his chamber till past ten; all which time was employed in study; though he took great liberty after it. And if this seem strange, it may gain a belief by the visible fruits of his labours; some of which remain as testimonies of what is here written: for he left the resultance of 1400 authors, most of them abridged and analysed with his own hand: he left also six score of his sermons, all written with his own hand, also an exact and laborious Treatise concerning self-murder, called Biathanatos; wherein all the laws violated by that act are diligently surveyed, and judiciously censured: a Treatise written in his younger days, which alone might declare him then not only perfect in the Civil and Canon Law, but in many other such studies and arguments, as

enter not into the consideration of many that labour to be thought great clerks, and pretend to know all things.

Nor were these only found in his study, but all businesses that passed of any public consequence, either in this or any of our neighbour-nations, he abbreviated either in Latin, or in the language of that nation, and kept them by him for useful memorials. So he did the copies of divers Letters and Cases of Conscience that had concerned his friends, with his observations and solutions of them; and divers other businesses of importance, all particularly and methodically digested by himself.

He did prepare to leave the world before life left him; making his Will when no faculty of his soul was damped or made defective by pain or sickness, or he surprised by a sudden apprehension of death: but it was made with mature deliberation, expressing himself an impartial father, by making his children's portions equal; and a lover of his friends, whom he remembered with legacies fitly and discreetly chosen and bequeathed. I cannot forbear a nomination of some of them; for methinks they be persons that seem to challenge a recordation in this place; as namely, to his brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Grimes, he gave that striking clock, which he had long worn in his pocket; to his dear friend and executor, Dr. King — late Bishop of Chichester — that Model of Gold of the Synod of Dort, with which the States presented him at his last being at the Hague; and the two pictures of Padre Paolo and Fulgentio, men of his acquaintance when he travelled Italy, and of great note in that nation for their remarkable learning. — To his ancient friend Dr. Brook — that married him — Master of Trinity College in Cambridge, he gave the picture of the Blessed Virgin and Joseph. — To Dr. Winniff who succeeded him in the Deanery — he gave a picture called the Skeleton. — To the succeeding Dean, who was not then known, he gave many necessaries of worth, and useful for his house; and also several pictures and ornaments for the Chapel, with a desire that they might be registered, and remain as a legacy to his successors. — To the Earls of Dorset and Carlisle he gave several pictures; and so he did to many other friends; legacies, given rather to express his affection, than to make any addition to their estates: but unto the poor he was full of charity, and unto many others, who, by his constant and long continued bounty, might entitle themselves to be his alms-people: for all these he made provision, and so largely, as, having then six children living, might to some appear more than proportionable to his estate. I forbear to mention any more, lest the reader

may think I trespass upon his patience: but I will beg his favour, to present him with the beginning and end of his Will.

“In the name of the blessed and glorious Trinity. Amen. I John Donne, by the mercy of Christ Jesus, and by the calling of the Church of England, Priest, being at this time in good health and perfect understanding — praised be God therefore — do hereby make my last Will and Testament in manner and form following: —

“First, I give my gracious God an entire sacrifice of body and soul, with my most humble thanks for that assurance which His Blessed Spirit imprints in me now of the Salvation of the one, and the Resurrection of the other; and for that constant and cheerful resolution, which the same Spirit hath established in me, to live and die in the religion now professed in the Church of England. In expectation of that Resurrection, I desire my body may be buried — in the most private manner that may be — in that place of St. Paul’s Church, London, that the now Residentiaries have at my request designed for that purpose, &c. — And this my last Will and Testament, made in the fear of God, — whose mercy I humbly beg, and constantly rely upon in Jesus Christ — and in perfect love and charity with all the world — whose pardon I ask, from the lowest of my servants, to the highest of my superiors — written all with my own hand, and my name subscribed to every page, of which there are five in number.

“Sealed December 13, 1630.”

Nor was this blessed sacrifice of charity expressed only at his death, but in his life also, by a cheerful and frequent visitation of any friend whose mind was dejected, or his fortune necessitous; he was inquisitive after the wants of prisoners, and redeemed many from prison, that lay for their fees or small debts: he was a continual giver to poor scholars, both of this and foreign nations. Besides what he gave with his own hand, he usually sent a servant, or a discreet and trusty friend, to distribute his charity to all the prisons in London, at all the festival times of the year, especially at the Birth and Resurrection of our Saviour. He gave an hundred pounds at one time to an old friend, whom he had known live plentifully, and by a too liberal heart and carelessness became decayed in his estate; and when the receiving of it was denied, by the gentleman’s saying, “He wanted not;” — for the reader may note, that as there be some spirits so generous as to labour to conceal and endure a sad poverty, rather than expose themselves to those blushes that attend the confession of it; so there be others, to whom

nature and grace have afforded such sweet and compassionate souls, as to pity and prevent the distresses of mankind; — which I have mentioned because of Dr. Donne's reply, whose answer was, "I know you want not what will sustain nature; for a little will do that; but my desire is, that you, who in the days of your plenty have cheered and raised the hearts of so many of your dejected friends, would now receive this from me, and use it as a cordial for the cheering of your own:" and upon these terms it was received. He was an happy reconciler of many differences in the families of his friends and kindred, — which he never undertook faintly; for such undertakings have usually faint effects — and they had such a faith in his judgment and impartiality, that he never advised them to any thing in vain. He was, even to her death, a most dutiful son to his mother, careful to provide for her supportation, of which she had been destitute, but that God raised him up to prevent her necessities; who having sucked in the religion of the Roman Church with the mother's milk, spent her estate in foreign countries, to enjoy a liberty in it, and died in his house but three months before him.

And to the end it may appear how just a steward he was of his Lord and Master's revenue, I have thought fit to let the reader know, that after his entrance into his Deanery, as he numbered his years, he, at the foot of a private account, to which God and His Angels were only witnesses with him, — computed first his revenue, then what was given to the poor, and other pious uses; and lastly, what rested for him and his; and having done that, he then blessed each year's poor remainder with a thankful prayer; which, for that they discover a more than common devotion, the reader shall partake some of them in his own words: —

So all is that remains this year —

"Deo Opt. Max. benigno largitori, á me, at ab iis quibus hæc à me reservantur, gloria et gratia in æternum. Amen."

Translated thus.

To God all Good, all Great, the benevolent Bestower, by me and by them, for whom, by me, these sums are laid up, be glory and grace ascribed for ever. Amen.

So that this year, God hath blessed me and mine with —

"Multiplicatæ sunt super nos misericordiæ tuæ, Domine."

Translated thus.

Thy mercies, Oh Lord! are multiplied upon us.

“Da, Domine, ut quæ ex immensâ bonitate tuâ nobis elargiri dignatus sis, in quorumcunque manus devenerint, in tuam semper cedant gloriam. Amen.”

Translated thus.

Grant, Oh Lord! that what out of Thine infinite bounty Thou hast vouchsafed to lavish upon us, into whosoever hands it may devolve, may always be improved to thy glory. Amen.

“In fine horum sex annorum manet [1627-8-9] —

“Quid habeo quod non accepi a Domino? Largitur etiam ut quæ largitus est sua iterum fiant, bono eorum usu; ut quemadmodum nec officiis hujus mundi, nec loci in quo me posuit dignitati, nec servis, nec egenis, in toto hujus anni curriculo mihi conscius sum me defuisse; ita et liberi, quibus quæ supersunt, supersunt, grato animo ea accipiant, et beneficum authorem recognoscant. Amen.”

Translated thus.

At the end of these six years remains —

What have I, which I have not received from the Lord? He bestows, also, to the intent that what He hath bestowed may revert to Him by the proper use of it: that, as I have not consciously been wanting to myself during the whole course of the past year, either in discharging my secular duties, in retaining the dignity of my station, or in my conduct towards my servants and the poor — so my children for whom remains whatever is remaining, may receive it with gratitude, and acknowledge the beneficent Giver. Amen.

But I return from my long digression.

We left the Author sick in Essex, where he was forced to spend much of that winter, by reason of his disability to remove from that place; and having never, for almost twenty years, omitted his personal attendance on his Majesty in that month, in which he was to attend and preach to him; nor having ever been left out of the roll and number of Lent Preachers, and there being then — in January, 1630 — a report brought to London, or raised there, that Dr. Donne was dead; that report gave him occasion to write the following letter to a dear friend: —

“Sir,

“This advantage you and my other friends have by my frequent fevers, that I am so much the oftener at the gates of Heaven; and this advantage by the solitude and close imprisonment that they reduce me to after, that I am

so much the oftener at my prayers, in which I shall never leave out your happiness; and I doubt not, among His other blessings, God will add some one to you for my prayers. A man would almost be content to die — if there were no other benefit in death — to hear of so much sorrow, and so much good testimony from good men, as I — God be blessed for it — did upon the report of my death; yet I perceive it went not through all; for one writ to me, that some — and he said of my friends — conceived I was not so ill as I pretended, but withdrew myself to live at ease, discharged of preaching. It is an unfriendly, and, God knows, an ill-grounded interpretation; for I have always been sorrier when I could not preach, than any could be they could not hear me. It hath been my desire, and God may be pleased to grant it, that I might die in the pulpit; if not that, yet that I might take my death in the pulpit; that is, die the sooner by occasion of those labours. Sir, I hope to see you presently after Candlemas; about which time will fall my Lent Sermon at Court, except my Lord Chamberlain believe me to be dead, and so leave me out of the roll: but as long as I live, and am not speechless, I would not willingly, decline that service. I have better leisure to write, than you to read; yet I would not willingly oppress you with too much letter. God so bless you and your son, as I wish to

"Your poor friend and Servant

"In Christ Jesus,

"J. Donne."

Before that month ended, he was appointed to preach upon his old constant day, the first Friday in Lent: he had notice of it, and had in his sickness so prepared for that employment, that as he had long thirsted for it, so he resolved his weakness should not hinder his journey; he came therefore to London some few days before his appointed day of preaching. At his coming thither, many of his friends — who with sorrow saw his sickness had left him but so much flesh as did only cover his bones — doubted his strength to perform that task, and did therefore dissuade him from undertaking it, assuring him, however, it was like to shorten his life: but he passionately denied their requests, saying "he would not doubt that that God, who in so many weaknesses had assisted him with an unexpected strength, would now withdraw it in his last employment; professing an holy ambition to perform that sacred work." And when, to the amazement of some beholders, he appeared in the pulpit, many of them thought he presented himself not to preach mortification by a living voice, but

mortality by a decayed body, and a dying face. And doubtless many did secretly ask that question in Ezekiel (chap. xxxvii. 3), “Do these bones live? or, can that soul organise that tongue, to speak so long time as the sand in that glass will move towards its centre, and measure out an hour of this dying man’s unspent life? Doubtless it cannot.” And yet, after some faint pauses in his zealous prayer, his strong desires enabled his weak body to discharge his memory of his preconceived meditations, which were of dying; the text being, “To God the Lord belong the issues from death.” Many that then saw his tears, and heard his faint and hollow voice, professing they thought the text prophetically chosen, and that Dr. Donne had preached his own Funeral Sermon.

Being full of joy that God had enabled him to perform this desired duty, he hastened to his house; out of which he never moved, till, like St. Stephen, “he was carried by devout men to his grave.”

The next day after his sermon, his strength being much wasted, and his spirits so spent as indisposed him to business or to talk, a friend that had often been a witness of his free and facetious discourse asked him, “Why are you sad?” To whom he replied with a countenance so full of cheerful gravity, as gave testimony of an inward tranquillity of mind, and of a soul willing to take a farewell of this world, and said: —

“I am not sad; but most of the night past I have entertained myself with many thoughts of several friends that have left me here, and are gone to that place from which they shall not return; and that within a few days I also shall go hence, and be no more seen. And my preparation for this change is become my nightly meditation upon my bed, which my infirmities have now made restless to me. But at this present time, I was in a serious contemplation of the providence and goodness of God to me; to me, who am less than the least of His mercies: and looking back upon my life past, I now plainly see it was His hand that prevented me from all temporal employment; and that it was His will I should never settle nor thrive till I entered into the Ministry; in which I have now lived almost twenty years — I hope to His glory, — and by which, I most humbly thank Him, I have been enabled to requite most of those friends which shewed me kindness when my fortune was very low, as God knows it was: and — as it hath occasioned the expression of my gratitude — I thank God most of them have stood in need of my requital. I have lived to be useful and comfortable to my good Father-in-law, Sir George More, whose patience God hath been

pleased to exercise with many temporal crosses; I have maintained my own mother, whom it hath pleased God, after a plentiful fortune in her younger days, to bring to great decay in her very old age. I have quieted the consciences of many, that have groaned under the burden of a wounded spirit, whose prayers I hope are available for me. I cannot plead innocency of life, especially of my youth; but I am to be judged by a merciful God, who is not willing to see what I have done amiss. And though of myself I have nothing to present to Him but sins and misery, yet I know He looks not upon me now as I am of myself, but as I am in my Saviour, and hath given me, even at this present time, some testimonies by His Holy Spirit, that I am of the number of His Elect: I am therefore full of inexpressible joy, and shall die in peace."

I must here look so far back, as to tell the reader that at his first return out of Essex, to preach his last sermon, his old friend and physician, Dr. Fox — a man of great worth — came to him to consult his health; and that after a sight of him, and some queries concerning his distempers he told him, "That by cordials, and drinking milk twenty days together, there was a probability of his restoration to health"; but he passionately denied to drink it. Nevertheless, Dr. Fox, who loved him most entirely, wearied him with solicitations, till he yielded to take it for ten days; at the end of which time he told Dr. Fox, "He had drunk it more to satisfy him, than to recover his health; and that he would not drink it ten days longer, upon the best moral assurance of having twenty years added to his life; for he loved it not; and was so far from fearing Death, which to others is the King of Terrors, that he longed for the day of his dissolution."

It is observed, that a desire of glory or commendation is rooted in the very nature of man; and that those of the severest and most mortified lives, though they may become so humble as to banish self-flattery, and such weeds as naturally grow there; yet they have not been able to kill this desire of glory, but that like our radical heat, it will both live and die with us; and many think it should do so; and we want not sacred examples to justify the desire of having our memory to outlive our lives; which I mention, because Dr. Donne, by the persuasion of Dr. Fox, easily yielded at this very time to have a monument made for him; but Dr. Fox undertook not to persuade him how, or what monument it should be; that was left to Dr. Donne himself.

A monument being resolved upon, Dr. Donne sent for a carver to make for him in wood the figure of an urn, giving him directions for the compass

and height of it; and to bring with it a board, of the just height of his body. “These being got, then without delay a choice painter was got to be in readiness to draw his picture, which was taken as followeth. — Several charcoal fires being first made in his large study, he brought with him into that place his winding-sheet in his hand, and having put off all his clothes, had this sheet put on him, and so tied with knots at his head and feet, and his hands so placed as dead bodies are usually fitted, to be shrouded and put into their coffin, or grave. Upon this urn he thus stood, with his eyes shut, and with so much of the sheet turned aside as might shew his lean, pale, and death-like face, which was purposely turned towards the East, from whence he expected the second coming of his and our Saviour Jesus.” In this posture he was drawn at his just height; and when the picture was fully finished, he caused it to be set by his bedside, where it continued and became his hourly object till his death, and was then given to his dearest friend and executor Dr. Henry King, then chief Residentiary of St. Paul’s, who caused him to be thus carved in one entire piece of white marble, as it now stands in that Church; and by Dr. Donne’s own appointment, these words were to be affixed to it as an epitaph: —

JOHANNES DONNE
SAC. THEOL. PROFESS.
POST VARIA STUDIA, QUIBUS AB ANNIS
TENERRIMIS FIDELITER, NEC INFELICITER
INCUBUIT;
INSTINCTU ET IMPULSU SP. SANCTI, MONITU
ET HORTATU
REGIS JACOBI, ORDINES SACROS AMPLEXUS,
ANNO SUI JESU, MDCXIV. ET SUÆ ÆTATIS XLII.
DECANATU HUJUS ECCLESIÆ INDUTUS,
XXVII. NOVEMBRIS, MDCXXI.
EXUTUS MORTE ULTIMO DIE MARTII, MDCXXXI.
HIC LICET IN OCCIDUO CINERE, ASPICIT EUM
CUJUS NOMEN EST ORIENS.

And now, having brought him through the many labyrinths and perplexities of a various life, even to the gates of death and the grave; my desire is, he may rest, till I have told my reader that I have seen many pictures of him, in several habits, and at several ages, and in several postures: and I now mention this because I have seen one picture of him,

drawn by a curious hand, at his age of eighteen, with his sword, and what other adornments might then suit with the present fashions of youth and the giddy gaieties of that age; and his motto then was —

"How much shall I be changed
Before I am changed!"

And if that young, and his now dying picture were at this time set together, every beholder might say, "Lord! how much is Dr. Donne already changed, before he is changed!" And the view of them might give my reader occasion to ask himself with some amazement, "Lord! how much may I also, that am now in health, be changed before I am changed; before this vile, this changeable body shall put off mortality!" and therefore to prepare for it. — But this is not writ so much for my reader's memento, as to tell him, that Dr. Donne would often in his private discourses, and often publicly in his sermons, mention the many changes both of his body and mind, especially of his mind from a vertiginous giddiness; and would as often say, "His great and most blessed change was from a temporal to a spiritual employment"; in which he was so happy, that he accounted the former part of his life to be lost; and the beginning of it to be, from his first entering into Sacred Orders, and serving his most merciful God at His altar.

Upon Monday, after the drawing this picture, he took his last leave of his beloved study; and, being sensible of his hourly decay, retired himself to his bedchamber; and that week sent at several times for many of his most considerable friends, with whom he took a solemn and deliberate farewell, commending to their considerations some sentences useful for the regulation of their lives; and then dismissed them, as good Jacob did his sons, with a spiritual benediction. The Sunday following, he appointed his servants, that if there were any business yet undone, that concerned him or themselves, it should be prepared against Saturday next; for after that day he would not mix his thoughts with any thing that concerned this world; nor ever did; but, as Job, so he "waited for the appointed day of his dissolution."

And now he was so happy as to have nothing to do but to die, to do which he stood in need of no longer time; for he had studied it long, and to so happy a perfection, that in a former sickness he called God to witness (in his "Book of Devotions," written then), "He was that minute ready to deliver his soul into his Hands, if that minute God would determine his dissolution." In that sickness he begged of God the constancy to be

preserved in that estate for ever; and his patient expectation to have his immortal soul disrobed from her garment of mortality, makes me confident that he now had a modest assurance that his prayers were then heard, and his petition granted. He lay fifteen days earnestly expecting his hourly change; and in the last hour of his last day, as his body melted away, and vapoured into spirit, his soul having, I verily believe, some revelation of the beatifical vision, he said, “I were miserable if I might not die”; and after those words, closed many periods of his faint breath by saying often, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.” His speech, which had long been his ready and faithful servant, left him not till the last minute of his life, and then forsook him, not to serve another master — for who speaks like him, — but died before him; for that it was then become useless to him, that now conversed with God on earth as Angels are said to do in heaven, only by thoughts and looks. Being speechless, and seeing heaven by that illumination by which he saw it, he did, as St. Stephen, “look stedfastly into it, till he saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God His Father”; and being satisfied with this blessed sight, as his soul ascended, and his last breath departed from him, he closed his own eyes, and then disposed his hands and body into such a posture, as required not the least alteration by those that came to shroud him.

Thus variable, thus virtuous was the life; thus excellent, thus exemplary was the death of this memorable man.

He was buried in that place of St. Paul’s Church, which he had appointed for that use some years before his death; and by which he passed daily to pay his public devotions to Almighty God — who was then served twice a day by a public form of prayer and praises in that place; but he was not buried privately, though he desired it; for, beside an unnumbered number of others, many persons of nobility, and of eminence for learning, who did love and honour him in his life, did show it at his death, by a voluntary and sad attendance of his body to the grave, where nothing was so remarkable as a public sorrow.

To which place of his burial some mournful friends repaired, and, as Alexander the Great did to the grave of the famous Achilles, so they strewed his with an abundance of curious and costly flowers; which course they — who were never yet known — continued morning and evening for many days, not ceasing till the stones that were taken up in that Church to give his body admission into the cold earth — now his bed of rest — were

again by the mason’s art so levelled and firmed as they had been formerly, and his place of burial undistinguishable to common view.

The next day after his burial some unknown friend, some one of the many lovers and admirers of his virtue and learning, writ this epitaph with a coal on the wall over his grave: —

“Reader! I am to let thee know,
Donne’s body only lies below;
For, could the grave his soul comprise,
Earth would be richer than the skies!”

Nor was this all the honour done to his reverend ashes; for, as there be some persons that will not receive a reward for that for which God accounts Himself a debtor; persons that dare trust God with their charity, and without a witness; so there was by some grateful unknown friend, that thought Dr. Donne’s memory ought to be perpetuated, an hundred marks sent to his faithful friends and executors (Dr. King and Dr. Montford), towards the making of his monument. It was not for many years known by whom; but, after the death of Dr. Fox, it was known that it was he that sent it; and he lived to see as lively a representation of his dead friend as marble can express: a statue indeed so like Dr. Donne, that — as his friend Sir Henry Wotton hath expressed himself — ”It seems to breathe faintly, and posterity shall look upon it as a kind of artificial miracle.”

He was of stature moderately tall; of a straight and equally-proportioned body, to which all his words and actions gave an unexpressible addition of comeliness.

The melancholy and pleasant humour were in him so contempered, that each gave advantage to the other, and made his company one of the delights of mankind.

His fancy was unimitably high, equalled only by his great wit; both being made useful by a commanding judgment.

His aspect was cheerful, and such as gave a silent testimony of a clear knowing soul, and of a conscience at peace with itself.

His melting eye showed that he had a soft heart, full of noble compassion; of too brave a soul to offer injuries, and too much a Christian not to pardon them in others.

He did much contemplate — especially after he entered into his sacred calling — the mercies of Almighty God, the immortality of the soul, and the

joys of heaven: and would often say in a kind of sacred ecstacy — ”Blessed be God that He is God, only and divinely like Himself.”

He was by nature highly passionate, but more apt to reluct at the excesses of it. A great lover of the offices of humanity, and of so merciful a spirit that he never beheld the miseries of mankind without pity and relief.

He was earnest and unwearied in the search of knowledge, with which his vigorous soul is now satisfied, and employed in a continual praise of that God that first breathed it into his active body: that body which once was a temple of the Holy Ghost, and is now become a small quantity of Christian dust: —

But I shall see it re-animated.

I.W.

JOHN DONNE by Arthur Symons

I

Biography as a fine art can go no further than Walton's *Life and Death of Dr. Donne*. From the 'good and virtuous parents' of the first line to the 'small quantity of Christian dust' of the last, every word is the touch of a cunning brush painting a picture. The picture lives, and with so vivid and gracious a life that it imposes itself upon us as the portrait of a real man, faithfully copied from the man as he lived. But that is precisely the art of the painter. Walton's picture is so beautiful because everything in it is sacrificed to beauty; because it is a convention, a picture in which life is treated almost as theme for music. And so there remains an opportunity, even after this masterpiece, for a life of Donne which shall make no pretence to harmonise a sometimes discordant existence, or indeed to produce, properly speaking, a piece of art at all; but which shall be faithful to the document, a piece of history. Such a book has now been written by Mr. Gosse, in his *Life and Letters of John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's*. It is perhaps the most solid and serious contribution which Mr. Gosse has made to English literature, and we may well believe that it will remain the final authority on so interesting and so difficult a subject. For the first time, in the light of this clear analysis, and of these carefully arranged letters, we are able, if not indeed to see Donne as he really was, at all events to form our own opinion about every action of his life. This is one of the merits of Mr. Gosse's book; he has collected his documents, and he has given them to us as they are, guiding us adroitly along the course of the life which they illustrate, but not allowing himself to dogmatise on what must still remain conjectural. And he has given us a series of reproductions of portraits, of the highest importance in the study of one who is not merely a difficult poet, but a very ambiguous human being. They begin with the eager, attractive, somewhat homely youth of eighteen, grasping the hilt of his sword so tightly that his knuckles start out from the thin covering of flesh; passing into the mature Donne as we know him, the lean, humorous, large-

browed, courtly thinker, with his large intent eyes, a cloak folded elegantly about his uncovered throat, or the ruff tightening about his carefully trimmed beard; and ending with the ghastly emblem set as a frontispiece to *Death's Duel*, the dying man wrapped already in his shroud, which gathers into folds above his head, as if tied together like the mouth of a sack, while the sunken cheeks and hollow closed eyelids are mocked by the shapely moustache, brushed upwards from the lips. In the beautiful and fanciful monument in St. Paul's done after the drawing from which this frontispiece was engraved, there is less ghastliness and a more harmonious beauty in the brave attitude of a man who dresses for death as he would dress for Court, wearing the last livery with an almost foppish sense of propriety. Between them these portraits tell much, and Mr. Gosse, in his narrative, tells us everything else that there is to tell, much of it for the first time; and the distinguished and saintly person of Walton's narrative, so simple, so easily explicable, becomes more complex at every moment, as fresh light makes the darkness more and more visible. At the end we seem to have become singularly intimate with a fascinating and puzzling creature, whom each of us may try to understand after his fashion, as we try to understand the real secrets of the character of our friends.

Donne's mind, then, if I may make my own attempt to understand him, was the mind of the dialectician, of the intellectual adventurer; he is a poet almost by accident, or at least for reasons with which art in the abstract has but little to do. He writes verse, first of all, because he has observed keenly, and because it pleases the pride of his intellect to satirise the pretensions of humanity. Then it is the flesh which speaks in his verse, the curiosity of woman, which he has explored in the same spirit of adventure; then passion, making a slave of him for love's sake, and turning at last to the slave's hatred; finally, religion, taken up with the same intellectual interest, the same subtle indifference, and, in its turn, passing also into passionate reality. A few poems are inspired in him by what he has seen in remote countries; some are marriage songs and funeral elegies, written for friendship or for money. But he writes nothing 'out of his own head,' as we say; nothing lightly, or, it would seem, easily; nothing for the song's sake. He speaks, in a letter, of 'descending to print anything in verse'; and it is certain that he was never completely absorbed by his own poetry, or at all careful to measure his achievements against those of others. He took his own poems very seriously, he worked upon them with the whole force of

his intellect; but to himself, even before he became a divine, he was something more than a poet. Poetry was but one means of expressing the many-sided activity of his mind and temperament. Prose was another, preaching another; travel and contact with great events and persons scarcely less important to him, in the building up of himself.

And he was interested in everything. At one moment he is setting himself to study Oriental languages, a singularly difficult task in those days. Both in poetry and divinity he has more Spanish than English books in his library. Scientific and technical terms are constantly found in his verse, where we should least expect them, where indeed they are least welcome. In *Ignatius — his Conclave* he speaks with learned enthusiasm of Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, and of his own immediate contemporaries, then but just become famous, Galileo (‘who of late hath summoned the other worlds, the stars, to come nearer to him, and to give an account of themselves’) and Kepler (‘who hath received it into his care, that no new thing should be done in heaven without his knowledge’). He rebukes himself for his abandonment to ‘the worst voluptuousness, which is an hydroptic, immoderate desire of human learning and languages.’ At twenty-three he was a soldier against Spain under Raleigh, and went on the ‘Islands Voyage’; later on, at different periods, he travelled over many parts of the Continent, with rich patrons or on diplomatic offices. Born a Catholic, he became a Protestant, deliberately enough; wrote books on controversial subjects, against his old party, before he had taken orders in the Church of England; besides a strange, morbid speculation on the innocence of suicide. He used his lawyer’s training for dubious enough purposes, advising the Earl of Somerset in the dark business of his divorce and re-marriage. And, in a mournful pause in the midst of many harrowing concerns, he writes to a friend: ‘When I must shipwreck, I would fain do it in a sea where mine own impotency might have some excuse; not in a sullen, weedy lake, where I could not have so much as exercise for my swimming. Therefore I would fain do something, but that I cannot tell what is no wonder.’ ‘Though I be in such a planetary and erratic fortune that I can do nothing constantly,’ he confesses later in the same letter.

No doubt some of this feverish activity, this uncertainty of aim, was a matter of actual physical health. It is uncertain at what time the wasting disease, of which he died, first settled upon him; but he seems to have been always somewhat sickly of body, and with just that at times depressing, at

times exciting, malady which tells most upon the whole organisation. That preoccupation with death, which in early life led him to write his *Biathanatos*, with its elaborate apology for suicide, and at the end of his life to prepare so spectacularly for the act of dying, was but one symptom of a morbid state of body and brain and nerves, to which so many of his poems and so many of his letters bear witness. ‘Sometimes,’ he writes, in a characteristic letter, ‘when I find myself transported with jollity and love of company, I hang lead to my heels, and reduce to my thoughts my fortunes, my years, the duties of a man, of a friend, of a husband, of a father, and all the incumbencies of a family; when sadness dejects me, either I countermine it with another sadness, or I kindle squibs about me again, and fly into sportfulness and company.’

At the age of thirty-five he writes from his bed describing every detail of what he frantically calls ‘a sickness which I cannot name or describe,’ and ends his letter: ‘I profess to you truly, that my loathness to give over now, seems to myself an ill sign that I shall write no more.’ It was at this time that he wrote the *Biathanatos*, with its explicit declaration in the preface: ‘Whensoever any affliction assails me, methinks I have the keys of my prison in mine own hand, and no remedy presents itself so soon to my heart as mine own sword.’ Fifteen years later, when one of his most serious illnesses was upon him, and his life in real danger, he notes down all his symptoms as he lies awake night after night, with an extraordinary and, in itself, morbid acuteness. ‘I observe the physician with the same diligence as he the disease; I see he fears, and I fear with him; I overtake him, I over-run him in his fear, because he makes his pace slow; I fear the more because he disguises his fear, and I see it with the more sharpness because he would not have me see it.’ As he lies in bed, he realises ‘I am mine own ghost, and rather affright my beholders than instruct them. They conceive the worst of me now, and yet fear worse; they give me for dead now, and yet wonder how I do when they wake at midnight, and ask how I do to-morrow. Miserable and inhuman posture, where I must practise my lying in the grave by lying still.’ This preying upon itself of the brain is but one significant indication of a temperament, neurotic enough indeed, but in which the neurosis is still that of the curious observer, the intellectual casuist, rather than of the artist. A wonderful piece of self-analysis, worthy of St. Augustine, which occurs in one of his funeral sermons, gives poignant expression to what must doubtless have been a common condition of so

sensitive a brain. ‘I throw myself down in my chamber, and I call in and invite God and His angels together; and when they are there, I neglect God and his angels for the noise of a fly, for the rattling of a coach, for the whining of a door; I talk on in the same posture of prayer, eyes lifted up, knees bowed down, as though I prayed to God; and if God should ask me when I last thought of God in that prayer, I cannot tell. Sometimes I find that I forgot what I was about; But when I began to forget it, I cannot tell. A memory of yesterday’s pleasures, a fear of to-morrow’s dangers, a straw under my knee, a noise in mine ear, a chimera in my brain, troubles me in my prayer.’ It is this brain, turned inward upon itself, and darting out on every side in purely random excursions, that was responsible, I cannot doubt, for all the contradictions of a career in which the inner logic is not at first apparent.

Donne’s career divides itself sharply into three parts: his youth, when we see him a soldier, a traveller, a lover, a poet, unrestrained in all the passionate adventures of youth; then a middle period, in which he is a lawyer and a theologian, seeking knowledge and worldly advancement, without any too restraining scruple as to the means which come to his hand; and then a last stage of saintly living and dying. What then is the link between these successive periods, the principle of development, the real Donne in short? ‘He was none of these, or all of these, or more,’ says Mr. Gosse. But, surely, he was indeed all of these, and his individuality precisely the growth from one stage to another, the subtle intelligence being always there, working vividly, but in each period working in a different direction. ‘I would fain do something, but that I cannot tell what is no wonder.’ Everything in Donne seems to me to explain itself in that fundamental uncertainty of aim, and his uncertainty of aim partly by a morbid physical condition. He searches, nothing satisfies him, tries everything, in vain; finding satisfaction at last in the Church, as in a haven of rest. Always it is the curious, insatiable brain searching. And he is always wretchedly aware that he ‘can do nothing constantly.’

His three periods, then, are three stages in the search after a way to walk in, something worthy of himself to do. Thus, of his one printed collection of verse he writes: ‘Of my *Anniversaries*, the fault which I acknowledge in myself is to have descended to print anything in verse, which, though it have excuse, even in our times, by example of men, which one would think should as little have done it as I, yet I confess I wonder how I declined to it,

and do not pardon myself.' Of his legal studies he writes in the same letter: 'For my purpose of proceeding in the profession of the law, so far as to a title, you may be pleased to correct that imagination where you find it. I ever thought the study of it my best entertainment and pastime, but I have no ambition nor design upon the style.' Until he accepts religion, with all its limitations and encouragements, he has not even sure landmarks on his way. So speculative a brain, able to prove, and proving for its own uneasy satisfaction, that even suicide is 'not so naturally sin, that it may never be otherwise,' could allow itself to be guided by no fixed rules; and to a brain so abstract, conduct must always have seemed of less importance than it does to most other people, and especially conduct which is argument, like the demonstrations on behalf of what seems, on the face of it, a somewhat iniquitous divorce and re-marriage, or like those unmeasured eulogies, both of this 'blest pair of swans,' and of the dead child of a rich father. He admits, in one of his letters, that in his elegies, 'I did best when I had least truth for my subjects'; and of the *Anniversaries* in honour of little Mistress Drury, 'But for the other part of the imputation of having said so much, my defence is, that my purpose was to say as well as I could; for since I never saw the gentlewoman, I cannot be understood to have bound myself to have spoken the just truth.' He is always the casuist, always mentally impartial in the face of a moral problem, reserving judgment on matters which, after all, seem to him remote from an unimpassioned contemplation of things; until that moment of crisis comes, long after he has become a clergyman, when the death of his wife changed the world for him, and he became, in the words of Walton, 'crucified to the world, and all those vanities, those imaginary pleasures, that are daily acted on that restless stage; and they were as perfectly crucified to him.' From that time to the end of his life he had found what he had all the while been seeking: rest for the restlessness of his mind, in a meditation upon the divine nature; occupation, in being 'ambassador of God,' through the pulpit; himself, as it seemed to him, at his fullest and noblest. It was himself, really, that he had been seeking all the time, conscious at least of that in all the deviations of the way; himself, the ultimate of his curiosities.

II

And yet, what remains to us out of this life of many purposes, which had found an end satisfying to itself in the Deanery of St. Paul's, is simply a bundle of manuscript verses, which the writer could bring himself neither to print nor to destroy. His first satire speaks contemptuously of 'giddy fantastic poets,' and, when he allowed himself to write poetry, he was resolved to do something different from what anybody had ever done before, not so much from the artist's instinctive desire of originality, as from a kind of haughty, yet really bourgeois, desire to be indebted to nobody. With what care he wrote is confessed in a passage of one of his letters, where, speaking of a sermon, he says: 'For, as Cardinal Cusanus wrote a book, *Cribratio Alchorani*, I have cribrated, and re-cribrated, and post-cribrated the sermon, and must necessarily say, the King, who hath let fall his eye upon some of my poems, never saw, of mine, a hand, or an eye, or an affection, set down with so much study and diligence, and labour of syllables, as in this sermon I expressed those two points.' But he thought there were other things more important than being a poet, and this very labour of his was partly a sign of it. 'He began,' says Mr. Gosse with truth, 'as if poetry had never been written before.' To the people of his time, to those who came immediately after him, he was the restorer of English poetry.

The Muses' garden, with pedantic weeds
O'erspread, was purged by thee,
says Carew, in those memorial verses in which the famous lines occur:
Here lies a king that ruled as he thought fit
The universal monarchy of wit.

Shakespeare was living, remember, and it was Elizabethan poetry that Donne set himself to correct. He began with metre, and invented a system of prosody which has many merits, and would have had more in less arbitrary hands. 'Donne, for not keeping of accent, deserved hanging,' said Ben Jonson, who was nevertheless his friend and admirer. And yet, if one will but read him always for the sense, for the natural emphasis of what he has to say, there are few lines which will not come out in at all events the way that he meant them to be delivered. The way he meant them to be delivered is not always as beautiful as it is expressive. Donne would be

original at all costs, preferring himself to his art. He treated poetry as Æsop's master treated his slave, and broke what he could not bend.

But Donne's novelty of metre is only a part of his too deliberate novelty as a poet. As Mr. Gosse has pointed out, with a self-evident truth which has apparently waited for him to say it, Donne's real position in regard to the poetry of his time was that of a realistic writer, who makes a clean sweep of tradition, and puts everything down in the most modern words and with the help of the most trivial actual images.

To what a cumbersome unwieldiness,
And burdensome corpulence my love hath grown,

he will begin a poem on *Love's Diet*. Of love, as the master of hearts, he declares seriously:

He swallows us and never chaws;
By him, as by chain'd shot, whole ranks do die;
He is the tyrant pike, our hearts the fry.

And, in his unwise insistence that every metaphor shall be absolutely new, he drags medical and alchemical and legal properties into verse really full of personal passion, producing at times poetry which is a kind of disease of the intellect, a sick offshoot of science. Like most poets of powerful individuality, Donne lost precisely where he gained. That cumulative and crowding and sweeping intellect which builds up his greatest poems into miniature Escurials of poetry, mountainous and four-square to all the winds of the world, 'purges' too often the flowers as well as the weeds out of 'the Muses' garden.' To write poetry as if it had never been written before is to attempt what the greatest poets never attempted. There are only two poets in English literature who thus stand out of the tradition, who are without ancestors, Donne and Browning. Each seems to have certain qualities almost greater than the qualities of the greatest; and yet in each some precipitation of arrogant egoism remains in the crucible, in which the draught has all but run immortally clear.

Donne's quality of passion is unique in English poetry. It is a rapture in which the mind is supreme, a reasonable rapture, and yet carried to a pitch of actual violence. The words themselves rarely count for much, as they do in Crashaw, for instance, where words turn giddy at the height of their ascension. The words mean things, and it is the things that matter. They can

be brutal: ‘For God’s sake, hold your tongue, and let me love!’ as if a long, pre-supposed self-repression gave way suddenly, in an outburst. ‘Love, any devil else but you,’ he begins, in his abrupt leap to the heart of the matter. Or else his exaltation will be grave, tranquil, measureless in assurance.

All kings, and all their favourites,
All glory of honours, beauties, wits,
The sun itself, which makes time, as they pass,
Is elder by a year now than it was
When thou and I first one another saw.
All other things to their destruction draw,
Only our love hath no decay;
This no to-morrow hath, no yesterday;
Running, it never runs from us away,
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.

This lover loves with his whole nature, and so collectedly because reason, in him, is not in conflict with passion, but passion’s ally. His senses speak with unparalleled directness, as in those elegies which must remain the model in English of masculine sensual sobriety. He distinguishes the true end of such loving in a forcible, characteristically prosaic image:

Whoever loves, if he do not propose
The right true end of love, he’s one that goes
To sea for nothing but to make him sick.

And he exemplifies every motion and the whole pilgrim’s progress of physical love, with a deliberate, triumphant, unluxurious explicitness which ‘leaves no doubt,’ as we say ‘of his intentions,’ and can be no more than referred to passingly in modern pages. In a series of hate poems, of which I will quote the finest, he gives expression to a whole region of profound human sentiment which has never been expressed, out of Catullus, with such intolerable truth.

When by thy scorn, O murderess, I am dead,
And that thou think’st thee free
From all solicitation from me,

Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,
And thee, feign’d vestal, in worse arms shall see:
Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,
And he, whose thou art then, being tired before,
Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think
Thou call’st for more,
And, in false sleep, will from thee shrink;
And then, poor aspen wretch, neglected thou
Bathed in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lie
A verier ghost than I.
What I will say, I will not tell thee now,
Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,
I’d rather thou should’st painfully repent,
Than by my threatenings rest still innocent.

Yet it is the same lover, and very evidently the same, who winnows all this earthly passion to a fine, fruitful dust, fit to make bread for angels. Ecstatic reason, passion justifying its intoxication by revealing the mysteries that it has come thus to apprehend, speak in the quintessence of Donne’s verse with an exalted simplicity which seems to make a new language for love. It is the simplicity of a perfectly abstract geometrical problem, solved by one to whom the rapture of solution is the blossoming of pure reason. Read the poem called *The Ecstasy*, which seems to anticipate a metaphysical Blake; it is all close reasoning, step by step, and yet is what its title claims for it.

It may be, though I doubt it, that other poets who have written personal verse in English, have known as much of women’s hearts and the senses of men, and the interchanges of passionate intercourse between man and woman; but, partly by reason of this very method of saying things, no one has ever rendered so exactly, and with such elaborate subtlety, every mood of the actual passion. It has been done in prose; may one not think of Stendhal, for a certain way he has of turning the whole forces of the mind upon those emotions and sensations which are mostly left to the heat of an unreflective excitement? Donne, as he suffers all the colds and fevers of love, is as much the sufferer and the physician of his disease as we have seen him to be in cases of actual physical sickness. Always detached from himself, even when he is most helplessly the slave of circumstances, he has

that frightful faculty of seeing through his own illusions; of having no illusions to the mind, only to the senses. Other poets, with more wisdom towards poetry, give us the beautiful or pathetic results of no matter what creeping or soaring passions. Donne, making a new thing certainly, if not always a thing of beauty, tells us exactly what a man really feels as he makes love to a woman, as he sits beside her husband at table, as he dreams of her in absence, as he scorns himself for loving her, as he hates or despises her for loving him, as he realises all that is stupid in her devotion, and all that is animal in his. ‘Nature’s lay idiot, I taught thee to love,’ he tells her, in a burst of angry contempt, priding himself on his superior craft in the art. And his devotions to her are exquisite, appealing to what is most responsive in woman, beyond those of tenderer poets. A woman cares most for the lover who understands her best, and is least taken in by what it is the method of her tradition to feign. So wearily conscious that she is not the abstract angel of her pretence and of her adorers, she will go far in sheer thankfulness to the man who can see so straight into her heart as to have

> found something like a heart,
> But colours it and corners had;
> It was not good, it was not bad,
> It was entire to none, and few had part.

Donne shows women themselves, in delight, anger, or despair; they know that he finds nothing in the world more interesting, and they much more than forgive him for all the ill he says of them. If women most conscious of their sex were ever to read Donne, they would say, He was a great lover; he understood.

And, in the poems of divine love, there is the same quality of mental emotion as in the poems of human love. Donne adores God reasonably, knowing why he adores Him. He renders thanks point by point, celebrates the heavenly perfections with metaphysical precision, and is no vaguer with God than with woman. Donne knew what he believed and why he believed, and is carried into no heat or mist as he tells over the recording rosary of his devotions. His *Holy Sonnets* are a kind of argument with God; they tell over, and discuss, and resolve, such perplexities of faith and reason as would really occur to a speculative brain like his. Thought crowds in upon

thought, in these tightly packed lines, which but rarely admit a splendour of this kind:

At the round earth's imagined corners blow

Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go.

More typical is this too knotted beginning of another sonnet:

Batter my heart, three-person'd God; for you
As yet but knock; breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force, to break, blow, burn, and make me new.

Having something very minute and very exact to say, he hates to leave anything out; dreading diffuseness, as he dreads the tame sweetness of an easy melody, he will use only the smallest possible number of words to render his thought; and so, as here, he is too often ingenious rather than felicitous, forgetting that to the poet poetry comes first, and all the rest afterwards.

For the writing of great poetry something more is needed than to be a poet and to have great occasions. Donne was a poet, and he had the passions and the passionate adventures, in body and mind, which make the material for poetry; he was sincere to himself in expressing what he really felt under the burden of strong emotion and sharp sensation. Almost every poem that he wrote is written on a genuine inspiration, a genuine personal inspiration, but most of his poems seem to have been written before that personal inspiration has had time to fuse itself with the poetic inspiration. It is always useful to remember Wordsworth's phrase of 'emotion recollected in tranquillity,' for nothing so well defines that moment of crystallisation in which direct emotion or sensation deviates exquisitely into art. Donne is intent on the passion itself, the thought, the reality; so intent that he is not at the same time, in that half-unconscious way which is the way of the really great poet, equally intent on the form, that both may come to ripeness together. Again it is the heresy of the realist. Just as he drags into his verse words that have had no time to take colour from men's association of them with beauty, so he puts his 'naked thinking heart' into verse as if he were setting forth an argument. He gives us the real thing, as he would have been

proud to assure us. But poetry will have nothing to do with real things, until it has translated them into a diviner world. That world may be as closely the pattern of ours as the worlds which Dante saw in hell and purgatory; the language of the poet may be as close to the language of daily speech as the supreme poetic language of Dante. But the personal or human reality and the imaginative or divine reality must be perfectly interfused, or the art will be at fault. Donne is too proud to abandon himself to his own inspiration, to his inspiration as a poet; he would be something more than a voice for deeper yet speechless powers; he would make poetry speak straight. Well, poetry will not speak straight, in the way Donne wished it to, and under the goading that his restless intellect gave it.

He forgot beauty, preferring to it every form of truth, and beauty has revenged itself upon him, glittering miraculously out of many lines in which he wrote humbly, and leaving the darkness of a retreating shadow upon great spaces in which a confident intellect was conscious of shining.

For, though mind be the heaven, where love may sit,
Beauty a convenient type may be to figure it,

he writes, in the *Valediction to his Book*, thus giving formal expression to his heresy. ‘The greatest wit, though not the best poet of our nation,’ Dryden called him; the greatest intellect, that is, which had expressed itself in poetry. Dryden himself was not always careful to distinguish between what material was fit and what unfit for verse; so that we can now enjoy his masterly prose with more equable pleasure than his verse. But he saw clearly enough the distinction in Donne between intellect and the poetical spirit; that fatal division of two forces, which, had they pulled together instead of apart, might have achieved a result wholly splendid. Without a great intellect no man was ever a great poet; but to possess a great intellect is not even a first step in the direction of becoming a poet at all.

Compare Donne, for instance, with Herrick. Herrick has little enough of the intellect, the passion, the weight and the magnificence of Donne; but, setting out with so much less to carry, he certainly gets first to the goal, and partly by running always in the right direction. The most limited poet in the language, he is the surest. He knows the airs that weave themselves into songs, as he knows the flowers that twine best into garlands. Words come to him in an order which no one will ever alter, and no one will ever forget.

Whether they come easily or not is no matter; he knows when they have come right, and they always come right before he lets them go. But Donne is only occasionally sure of his words as airs; he sets them doggedly to the work of saying something, whether or no they step to the beat of the music. Conscious writer though he was, I suppose he was more or less unconscious of his extraordinary felicities, more conscious probably of how they came than of what they were doing. And they come chiefly through a sudden heightening of mood, which brings with it a clearer and a more exalted mode of speech, in its merely accurate expression of itself. Even then I cannot imagine him quite reconciled to beauty, at least actually doing homage to it, but rather as one who receives a gift by the way.

1899.

JOHN DONNE by Robert Lynd

Izaak Walton in his short life of Donne has painted a figure of almost seraphic beauty. When Donne was but a boy, he declares, it was said that the age had brought forth another Pico della Mirandola. As a young man in his twenties, he was a prince among lovers, who by his secret marriage with his patron's niece — "for love," says Walton, "is a flattering mischief" — purchased at first only the ruin of his hopes and a term in prison. Finally, we have the later Donne in the pulpit of St. Paul's represented, in a beautiful adaptation of one of his own images, as "always preaching to himself, like an angel from a cloud, though in none; carrying some, as St. Paul was, to Heaven in holy raptures, and enticing others by a sacred art and courtship to amend their lives." The picture is all of noble charm. Walton speaks in one place of "his winning behaviour — which, when it would entice, had a strange kind of elegant irresistible art." There are no harsh phrases even in the references to those irregularities of Donne's youth, by which he had wasted the fortune of £3,000 — equal, I believe, to more than £30,000 of our money — bequeathed to him by his father, the ironmonger. "Mr. Donne's estate," writes Walton gently, referring to his penury at the time of his marriage, "was the greatest part spent in many and chargeable travels, books, and dear-bought experience." It is true that he quotes Donne's own confession of the irregularities of his early life. But he counts them of no significance. He also utters a sober reproof of Donne's secret marriage as "the remarkable error of his life." But how little he condemned it in his heart is clear when he goes on to tell us that God blessed Donne and his wife "with so mutual and cordial affections, as in the midst of their sufferings made their bread of sorrow taste more pleasantly than the banquets of dull and low-spirited people." It was not for Walton to go in search of small blemishes in him whom he regarded as the wonder of the world — him whose grave, mournful friends "strewed … with an abundance of curious and costly flowers," as Alexander the Great strewed the grave of "the famous Achilles." In that grave there was buried for Walton a whole age magnificent with wit, passion, adventure, piety and

beauty. More than that, the burial of Donne was for him the burial of an inimitable Christian. He mourns over “that body, which once was a Temple of the Holy Ghost, and is now become a small quantity of Christian dust,” and, as he mourns, he breaks off with the fervent prophecy, “But I shall see it reanimated.” That is his valediction. If Donne is esteemed three hundred years after his death less as a great Christian than as a great pagan, this is because we now look for him in his writings rather than in his biography, in his poetry rather than in his prose, and in his *Songs and Sonnets* and *Elegies* rather than in his *Divine Poems*. We find, in some of these, abundant evidence of the existence of a dark angel at odds with the good angel of Walton’s raptures. Donne suffered in his youth all the temptations of Faust. His thirst was not for salvation but for experience — experience of the intellect and experience of sensation. He has left it on record in one of his letters that he was a victim at one period of “the worst voluptuousness, an hydroptic, immoderate desire of human learning and languages.” Faust in his cell can hardly have been a more insatiate student than Donne. “In the most unsettled days of his youth,” Walton tells us, “his bed was not able to detain him beyond the hour of four in the morning; and it was no common business that drew him out of his chamber till past ten; all which time was employed in study; though he took great liberty after it.” His thoroughness of study may be judged from the fact that “he left the resultance of 1,400 authors, most of them abridged and analyzed with his own hand.” But we need not go beyond his poems for proof of the wilderness of learning that he had made his own. He was versed in medicine and the law as well as in theology. He subdued astronomy, physiology, and geography to the needs of poetry. Nine Muses were not enough for him, even though they included Urania. He called in to their aid Galen and Copernicus. He did not go to the hills and the springs for his images, but to the laboratory and the library, and in the library the books that he consulted to the greatest effect were the works of men of science and learning, not of the great poets with whom London may almost be said to have been peopled during his lifetime. I do not think his verse or correspondence contains a single reference to Shakespeare, whose contemporary he was, being born only nine years later. The only great Elizabethan poet whom he seems to have regarded with interest and even friendship was Ben Jonson. Jonson’s Catholicism may have been a link between them. But, more important than that, Jonson was, like Donne himself, an inflamed pedant. For each of them learning was the

necessary robe of genius. Jonson, it is true, was a pedant of the classics, Donne of the speculative sciences; but both of them alike ate to a surfeit of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. It was, I think, because Donne was to so great a degree a pagan of the Renaissance, loving the proud things of the intellect more than the treasures of the humble, that he found it easy to abandon the Catholicism of his family for Protestantism. He undoubtedly became in later life a convinced and passionate Christian of the Protestant faith, but at the time when he first changed his religion he had none of the fanaticism of the pious convert. He wrote in an early satire as a man whom the intellect had liberated from dogma-worship. Nor did he ever lose this rationalist tolerance. “You know,” he once wrote to a friend, “I have never imprisoned the word religion…. They” (the churches) “are all virtual beams of one sun.” Few converts in those days of the wars of religion wrote with such wise reason of the creeds as did Donne in the lines:

To adore or scorn an image, or protest,
May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way
To stand inquiring right, is not to stray;
To sleep or run wrong is. On a huge hill,
Cragged and steep, Truth stands, and he that will
Reach her, about must and about must go;
And what the hill’s suddenness resists win so.

This surely was the heresy of an inquisitive mind, not the mood of a theologian. It betrays a tolerance springing from ardent doubt, not from ardent faith.

It is all in keeping with one’s impression of the young Donne as a man setting out bravely in his cockle-shell on the oceans of knowledge and experience. He travels, though he knows not why he travels. He loves, though he knows not why he loves. He must escape from that “hydroptic, immoderate” thirst of experience by yielding to it. One fancies that it was in this spirit that he joined the expedition of Essex to Cadiz in 1596 and afterwards sailed to the Azores. Or partly in this spirit, for he himself leads one to think that his love-affairs may have had something to do with it. In the second of those prematurely realistic descriptions of storm and calm relating to the Azores voyage, he writes:

Whether a rotten state, and hope of gain,
Or to disuse me from the queasy pain
Of being belov’d, and loving, or the thirst
Of honour, or fair death, out pusht me first.

In these lines we get a glimpse of the Donne that has attracted most interest in recent years — the Donne who experienced more variously than any other poet of his time “the queasy pain of being beloved and loving.” Donne was curious of adventures of many kinds, but in nothing more than in love. As a youth he leaves the impression of having been an Odysseus of love, a man of many wiles and many travels. He was a virile neurotic, comparable in some points to Baudelaire, who was a sensualist of the mind even more than of the body. His sensibilities were different as well as less of a piece, but he had something of Baudelaire’s taste for hideous and shocking aspects of lust. One is not surprised to find among his poems that “heroical epistle of Sappho to Philaenis,” in which he makes himself the casuist of forbidden things. His studies of sensuality, however, are for the most part normal, even in their grossness. There was in him more of the Yahoo than of the decadent. There was an excremental element in his genius as in the genius of that other gloomy dean, Jonathan Swift. Donne and Swift were alike satirists born under Saturn. They laughed more frequently from disillusion than from happiness. Donne, it must be admitted, turned his disillusion to charming as well as hideous uses. *Go and Catch a Falling Star* is but one of a series of delightful lyrics in disparagement of women. In several of the *Elegies*, however, he throws away his lute and comes to the satirist’s more prosaic business. He writes frankly as a man in search of bodily experiences:

Whoever loves, if he do not propose
The right true end of love, he’s one that goes
To sea for nothing but to make him sick.

In *Love Progress* he lets his fancy dwell on the detailed geography of a woman’s body, with the sick imagination of a schoolboy, till the beautiful seems almost beastly. In *The Anagram* and *The Comparison* he plays the Yahoo at the expense of all women by the similes he uses in insulting two of them. In *The Perfume* he relates the story of an intrigue with a girl whose

father discovered his presence in the house as a result of his using scent. Donne's jest about it is suggestive of his uncontrollable passion for ugliness:

Had it been some bad smell, he would have thought
That his own feet, or breath, that smell had brought.

It may be contended that in *The Perfume* he was describing an imaginary experience, and indeed we have his own words on record: "I did best when I had least truth for my subjects." But even if we did not accept Mr. Gosse's common-sense explanation of these words, we should feel that the details of the story have a vividness that springs straight from reality. It is difficult to believe that Donne had not actually lived in terror of the gigantic manservant who was set to spy on the lovers:

The grim eight-foot-high iron-bound serving-man
That oft names God in oaths, and only then;
He that to bar the first gate doth as wide
As the great Rhodian Colossus stride,
Which, if in hell no other pains there were,
Makes me fear hell, because he must be there.

But the most interesting of all the sensual intrigues of Donne, from the point of view of biography, especially since Mr. Gosse gave it such commanding significance in that *Life of John Donne* in which he made a living man out of a mummy, is that of which we have the story in *Jealousy* and *His Parting from Her*. It is another story of furtive and forbidden love. Its theme is an intrigue carried on under a

Husband's towering eyes,
That flamed with oily sweat of jealousy.

A characteristic touch of grimness is added to the story by making the husband a deformed man. Donne, however, merely laughs at his deformity, as he bids the lady laugh at the jealousy that reduces her to tears:

O give him many thanks, he is courteous,

That in suspecting kindly warneth us.
We must not, as we used, flout openly,
In scoffing riddles, his deformity;
Nor at his board together being set,
With words nor touch scarce looks adulterate.

And he proposes that, now that the husband seems to have discovered them, they shall henceforth carry on their intrigue at some distance from where

He, swol'n and pampered with great fare,
Sits down and snorts, cag'd in his basket chair.

It is an extraordinary story, if it is true. It throws a scarcely less extraordinary light on the nature of Donne's mind, if he invented it. At the same time, I do not think the events it relates played the important part which Mr. Gosse assigns to them in Donne's spiritual biography. It is impossible to read Mr. Gosse's two volumes without getting the impression that "the deplorable but eventful liaison," as he calls it, was the most fruitful occurrence in Donne's life as a poet. He discovers traces of it in one great poem after another — even in the *Nocturnal upon St. Lucy's Day*, which is commonly supposed to relate to the Countess of Bedford, and in *The Funeral*, the theme of which Professor Grierson takes to be the mother of George Herbert. I confess that the oftener I read the poetry of Donne the more firmly I become convinced that, far from being primarily the poet of desire gratified and satiated, he is essentially the poet of frustrated love. He is often described by the historians of literature as the poet who finally broke down the tradition of Platonic love. I believe that, so far is this from being the case, he is the supreme example of a Platonic lover among the English poets. He was usually Platonic under protest, but at other times exultantly so. Whether he finally overcame the more consistent Platonism of his mistress by the impassioned logic of *The Ecstasy* we have no means of knowing. If he did, it would be difficult to resist the conclusion that the lady who wished to continue to be his passionate friend and to ignore the physical side of love was Anne More, whom he afterwards married. If not, we may look for her where we will, whether in Magdalen Herbert (already a young widow who had borne ten children when he first met her) or in the

Countess of Bedford or in another. The name is not important, and one is not concerned to know it, especially when one remembers Donne's alarming curse on:

> Whoever guesses, thinks, or dreams he knows
> Who is my mistress.

One sort of readers will go on speculating, hoping to discover real people in the shadows, as they speculate about Swift's Stella and Vanessa, and his relations to them. It is enough for us to feel, however, that these poems railing at or glorying in Platonic love are no mere goldsmith's compliments, like the rhymed letters to Mrs. Herbert and Lady Bedford. Miracles of this sort are not wrought save by the heart. We do not find in them the underground and sardonic element that appears in so much of Donne's merely amorous work. We no longer picture him as a sort of Vulcan hammering out the poetry of base love, raucous, powerful, mocking. He becomes in them a child Apollo, as far as his temperament will allow him. He makes music of so grave and stately a beauty that one begins to wonder at all the critics who have found fault with his rhythms — from Ben Jonson, who said that "for not keeping accent, Donne deserved hanging," down to Coleridge, who declared that his "muse on dromedary trots," and described him as "rhyme's sturdy cripple." Coleridge's quatrain on Donne is, without doubt, an unequalled masterpiece of epigrammatic criticism. But Donne rode no dromedary. In his greatest poems he rides Pegasus like a master, even if he does rather weigh the poor beast down by carrying an encyclopædia in his saddle-bags.

Not only does Donne remain a learned man on his Pegasus, however: he also remains a humorist, a serious fantastic. Humour and passion pursue each other through the labyrinth of his being, as we find in those two beautiful poems, *The Relic* and *The Funeral*, addressed to the lady who had given him a bracelet of her hair. In the former he foretells what will happen if ever his grave is broken up and his skeleton discovered with

> A bracelet of bright hair about the bone.
> People will fancy, he declares, that the bracelet is a device of lovers
> To make their souls at the last busy day
> Meet at the grave and make a little stay.

Bone and bracelet will be worshipped as relics — the relics of a Magdalen and her lover. He conjectures with a quiet smile:

All women shall adore us, and some men.

He warns his worshippers, however, that the facts are far different from what they imagine, and tells the miracle seekers what in reality were “the miracles we harmless lovers wrought”:

First we loved well and faithfully,
Yet knew not what we lov’d, nor why;
Difference of sex no more we knew
Than our guardian angels do;
Coming and going, we
Perchance might kiss, but not between those meals;
Our hands ne’er touch’d the seals,
Which nature, injur’d by late law, sets free:
These miracles we did; but now, alas!
All measure, and all language I should pass,
Should I tell what a miracle she was.

In *The Funeral* he returns to the same theme:

Whoever comes to shroud me do not harm
Nor question much
That subtle wreath of hair that crowns my arm;
The mystery, the sign you must not touch,
For ‘tis my outward soul.

In this poem, however, he finds less consolation than before in the too miraculous nobleness of their love:

Whate’er she meant by it, bury it with me,
For since I am
Love’s martyr, it might breed idolatry,
If into other hands these relics came;
As ‘twas humility
To afford to it all that a soul can do,
So, ‘tis some bravery,
That, since you would have none of me, I bury some of you.

In *The Blossom* he is in a still more earthly mood, and declares that, if his mistress remains obdurate, he will return to London, where he will find

a mistress:

As glad to have my body as my mind.

The Primrose is another appeal for a less intellectual love:

Should she
Be more than woman, she would get above
All thought of sex, and think to move
My heart to study her, and not to love.

If we turn back to *The Undertaking*, however, we find Donne boasting once more of the miraculous purity of a love which it would be useless to communicate to other men, since, there being no other mistress to love in the same kind, they "would love but as before." Hence he will keep the tale a secret:

If, as I have, you also do,
Virtue attir'd in woman see,
And dare love that, and say so too,
And forget the He and She.
And if this love, though placed so,
From profane men you hide,
Which will no faith on this bestow,
Or, if they do, deride:
Then you have done a braver thing
Than all the Worthies did;
And a braver thence will spring,
Which is, to keep that hid.

It seems to me, in view of this remarkable series of poems, that it is useless to look in Donne for a single consistent attitude to love. His poems take us round the entire compass of love as the work of no other English poet — not even, perhaps, Browning's — does. He was by destiny the complete experimentalist in love in English literature. He passed through phase after phase of the love of the body only, phase after phase of the love of the soul only, and ended as the poet of the perfect marriage. In his youth he was a gay — but was he ever really gay? — free-lover, who sang jestingly:

How happy were our sires in ancient time,

Who held plurality of loves no crime!
But even then he looks forward, not with cynicism, to a time when he
Shall not so easily be to change dispos'd,
Nor to the arts of several eyes obeying;
But beauty with true worth securely weighing,
Which, being found assembled in some one,
We'll love her ever, and love her alone.

By the time he writes *The Ecstasy* the victim of the body has become the protesting victim of the soul. He cries out against a love that is merely an ecstatic friendship:

But O alas, so long, so far,
Our bodies why do we forbear?

He pleads for the recognition of the body, contending that it is not the enemy but the companion of the soul:

Soul into the soul may flow
Though it to body first repair.

The realistic philosophy of love has never been set forth with greater intellectual vehemence:

So must pure lovers' souls descend
T' affections and to faculties,
Which sense may reach and apprehend,
Else a great Prince in prison lies.
To our bodies turn we then, that so
Weak men on love reveal'd may look;
Love's mysteries in souls do grow
But yet the body is the book.

I, for one, find it impossible to believe that all this passionate verse — verse in which we find the quintessence of Donne's genius — was a mere utterance of abstract thoughts into the wind. Donne, as has been pointed out, was more than most writers a poet of personal experience. His greatest poetry was born of struggle and conflict in the obscure depths of the soul as surely as was the religion of St. Paul. I doubt if, in the history of his genius, any event ever happened of equal importance to his meeting with the lady who first set going in his brain that fevered dialogue between the body and the soul. Had he been less of a frustrated lover, less of a martyr, in whom love's

Art did express
A quintessence even from nothingness,
From dull privations and lean emptiness,

much of his greatest poetry, it seems to me, would never have been written.

One cannot, unfortunately, write the history of the progress of Donne's genius save by inference and guessing. His poems were not, with some unimportant exceptions, published in his lifetime. He did not arrange them in chronological or in any sort of order. His poem on the flea that has bitten both him and his inamorata comes after the triumphant *Anniversary*, and but a page or two before the *Nocturnal upon St. Lucy's Day*. Hence there is no means of telling how far we are indebted to the Platonism of one woman, how much to his marriage with another, for the enrichment of his genius. Such a poem as *The Canonisation* can be interpreted either in a Platonic sense or as a poem written to Anne More, who was to bring him both imprisonment and the liberty of love. It is, in either case, written in defence of his love against some who censured him for it:

For God's sake, hold your tongue, and let me love.

In the last verses of the poem Donne proclaims that his love cannot be measured by the standards of the vulgar:

We can die by it, if not live by love,
And if unfit for tombs or hearse
Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;
And, if no piece of chronicle we prove,
We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms;
As well a well-wrought urn becomes
The greatest ashes as half-acre tombs,
And by these hymns all shall approve
Us canoniz'd by love:
And thus invoke us: "You whom reverend love
Made one another's hermitage;
You to whom love was peace, that now is rage;
Who did the whole world's soul contract and drove
Into the glasses of your eyes
(So made such mirrors, and such spies,

That they did all to you epitomize),
Countries, towns, courts. Beg from above
A pattern of your love!”

According to Walton, it was to his wife that Donne addressed the beautiful verses beginning:

Sweetest love, I do not go
For weariness of thee;

as well as the series of *Valedictions*. Of many of the other love-poems, however, we can measure the intensity but not guess the occasion. All that we can say with confidence when we have read them is that, after we have followed one tributary on another leading down to the ultimate Thames of his genius, we know that his progress as a lover was a progress from infidelity to fidelity, from wandering amorousness to deep and enduring passion. The image that is finally stamped on his greatest work is not that of a roving adulterer, but of a monotheist of love. It is true that there is enough Don-Juanism in the poems to have led even Sir Thomas Browne to think of Donne’s verse rather as a confession of his sins than as a golden book of love. Browne’s quaint poem, *To the deceased Author, before the Promiscuous printing of his Poems, the Looser Sort, with the Religious*, is so little known that it may be quoted in full as the expression of one point of view in regard to Donne’s work:

When thy loose raptures, Donne, shall meet with those
That do confine
Tuning unto the duller line,
And sing not but in sanctified prose,
How will they, with sharper eyes,
The foreskin of thy fancy circumcise,
And fear thy wantonness should now begin
Example, that hath ceased to be sin!
And that fear fans their heat; whilst knowing eyes
Will not admire
At this strange fire
That here is mingled with thy sacrifice,
But dare read even thy wanton story
As thy confession, not thy glory;

And will so envy both to future times,
That they would buy thy goodness with thy crimes.

To the modern reader, on the contrary, it will seem that there is as much divinity in the best of the love-poems as in the best of the religious ones. Donne's last word as a secular poet may well be regarded as having been uttered in that great poem in celebration of lasting love, *The Anniversary*, which closes with so majestic a sweep:

Here upon earth we are kings, and none but we
Can be such kings, nor of such subjects be.
Who is so safe as we, where none can do
Treason to us, except one of us two?
True and false fears let us refrain;
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, till we attain
To write three-score: this is the second of our reign.

Donne's conversion as a lover was obviously as complete and revolutionary as his conversion in religion.

It is said, indeed, to have led to his conversion to passionate religion. When his marriage with Sir George More's sixteen-year-old daughter brought him at first only imprisonment and poverty, he summed up the sorrows of the situation in the famous line — a line which has some additional interest as suggesting the correct pronunciation of his name:

John Donne; Anne Donne; Undone.

His married life, however, in spite of a succession of miseries due to ill-health, debt and thwarted ambition, seems to have been happy beyond prophecy; and when at the end of sixteen years his wife died in childbed, after having borne him twelve children, a religious crisis resulted that turned his conventional churchmanship into sanctity. His original change from Catholicism to Protestantism has been already mentioned. Most of the authorities are agreed, however, that this was a conversion in a formal rather than in a spiritual sense. Even when he took Holy Orders in 1615, at the age of forty-two, he appears to have done so less in answer to any impulse to a religious life from within than because, with the downfall of Somerset, all hope of advancement through his legal attainments was brought to an end.

Undoubtedly, as far back as 1612, he had thought of entering the Church. But we find him at the end of 1613 writing an epithalamium for the murderers of Sir Thomas Overbury. It is a curious fact that three great poets — Donne, Ben Jonson, and Campion — appear, though innocently enough, in the story of the Countess of Essex's sordid crime. Donne's temper at the time is still clearly that of a man of the world. His jest at the expense of Sir Walter Raleigh, then in the Tower, is the jest of an ungenerous worldling. Even after his admission into the Church he reveals himself as ungenerously morose when the Countess of Bedford, in trouble about her own extravagances, can afford him no more than £30 to pay his debts. The truth is, to be forty and a failure is an affliction that might sour even a healthy nature. The effect on a man of Donne's ambitious and melancholy temperament, together with the memory of his dissipated health and his dissipated fortune, and the spectacle of a long family in constant process of increase, must have been disastrous. To such a man poverty and neglected merit are a prison, as they were to Swift. One thinks of each of them as a lion in a cage, ever growing less and less patient of his bars. Shakespeare and Shelley had in them some volatile element that could, one feels, have escaped through the bars and sung above the ground. Donne and Swift were morbid men suffering from claustrophobia. They were pent and imprisoned spirits, hating the walls that seemed to threaten to close in on them and crush them. In his poems and letters Donne is haunted especially by three images — the hospital, the prison, and the grave. Disease, I think, preyed on his mind even more terrifyingly than warped ambition. "Put all the miseries that man is subject to together," he exclaims in one of the passages in that luxuriant anthology that Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith has made from the *Sermons*; "sickness is more than all …. In poverty I lack but other things; in banishment I lack but other men; but in sickness I lack myself." Walton declares that it was from consumption that Donne suffered; but he had probably the seeds of many diseases. In some of his letters he dwells miserably on the symptoms of his illnesses. At one time, his sickness "hath so much of a cramp that it wrests the sinews, so much of tetane that it withdraws and pulls the mouth, and so much of the gout … that it is not like to be cured…. I shall," he adds, "be in this world, like a porter in a great house, but seldomest abroad; I shall have many things to make me weary, and yet not get leave to be gone." Even after his conversion he felt drawn to a morbid insistence on the details of his ill-health. Those amazing records

which he wrote while lying ill in bed in October, 1623, give us a realistic study of a sick-bed and its circumstances, the gloom of which is hardly even lightened by his odd account of the disappearance of his sense of taste: “My taste is not gone away, but gone up to sit at David’s table; my stomach is not gone, but gone upwards toward the Supper of the Lamb.” “I am mine own ghost,” he cries, “and rather affright my beholders than interest them…. Miserable and inhuman fortune, when I must practise my lying in the grave by lying still.”

It does not surprise one to learn that a man thus assailed by wretchedness and given to looking in the mirror of his own bodily corruptions was often tempted, by “a sickly inclination,” to commit suicide, and that he even wrote, though he did not dare to publish, an apology for suicide on religious grounds, his famous and little-read *Biathanatos*. The family crest of the Donnes was a sheaf of snakes, and these symbolize well enough the brood of temptations that twisted about in this unfortunate Christian’s bosom. Donne, in the days of his salvation, abandoned the family crest for a new one — Christ crucified on an anchor. But he might well have left the snakes writhing about the anchor. He remained a tempted man to the end. One wishes that the *Sermons* threw more light on his later personal life than they do. But perhaps that is too much to expect of sermons. There is no form of literature less personal except a leading article. The preacher usually regards himself as a mouthpiece rather than a man giving expression to himself. In the circumstances what surprises us is that the *Sermons* reveal, not so little, but so much of Donne. Indeed, they make us feel far more intimate with Donne than do his private letters, many of which are little more than exercises in composition. As a preacher, no less than as a poet, he is inflamed by the creative heat. He shows the same vehemence of fancy in the presence of the divine and infernal universe — a vehemence that prevents even his most far-sought extravagances from disgusting us as do the lukewarm follies of the Euphuists. Undoubtedly the modern reader smiles when Donne, explaining that man can be an enemy of God as the mouse can be an enemy to the elephant, goes on to speak of “God who is not only a multiplied elephant, millions of elephants multiplied into one, but a multiplied world, a multiplied all, all that can be conceived by us, infinite many times over; nay (if we may dare to say so) a multiplied God, a God that hath the millions of the heathens’ gods in Himself alone.” But at the same time one finds oneself taking a serious pleasure in the huge sorites of

quips and fancies in which he loves to present the divine argument. Nine out of ten readers of the *Sermons,* I imagine, will be first attracted to them through love of the poems. They need not be surprised if they do not immediately enjoy them. The dust of the pulpit lies on them thickly enough. As one goes on reading them, however, one becomes suddenly aware of their florid and exiled beauty. One sees beyond their local theology to the passion of a great suffering artist. Here are sentences that express the Paradise, the Purgatory, and the Hell of John Donne's soul. A noble imagination is at work — a grave-digging imagination, but also an imagination that is at home among the stars. One can open Mr. Pearsall Smith's anthology almost at random and be sure of lighting on a passage which gives us a characteristic movement in the symphony of horror and hope that was Donne's contribution to the art of prose. Listen to this, for example, from a sermon preached in St. Paul's in January, 1626:

Let me wither and wear out mine age in a discomfortable, in an unwholesome, in a penurious prison, and so pay my debts with my bones, and recompense the wastefulness of my youth with the beggary of mine age; let me wither in a spittle under sharp, and foul, and infamous diseases, and so recompense the wantonness of my youth with that loathsomeness in mine age; yet, if God withdraw not his spiritual blessings, his grace, his patience, if I can call my suffering his doing, my passion his action, all this that is temporal, is but a caterpillar got into one corner of my garden, but a mildew fallen upon one acre of my corn: the body of all, the substance of all is safe, so long as the soul is safe.

The self-contempt with which his imagination loved to intoxicate itself finds more lavish expression in a passage in a sermon delivered on Easter Sunday two years later:

When I consider what I was in my parents' loins (a substance unworthy of a word, unworthy of a thought), when I consider what I am now (a volume of diseases bound up together; a dry cinder, if I look for natural, for radical moisture; and yet a sponge, a bottle of overflowing Rheums, if I consider accidental; an aged child, a grey-headed infant, and but the ghost of mine own youth), when I consider what I shall be at last, by the hand of death, in my grave (first, but putrefaction, and, not so much as putrefaction; I shall not be able to send forth so much as ill air, not any air at all, but shall be all insipid, tasteless, savourless, dust; for a while, all worms, and after a while, not so much as worms, sordid, senseless, nameless dust), when I

consider the past, and present, and future state of this body, in this world, I am able to conceive, able to express the worst that can befall it in nature, and the worst that can be inflicted on it by man, or fortune. But the least degree of glory that God hath prepared for that body in heaven, I am not able to express, not able to conceive.

Excerpts of great prose seldom give us that rounded and final beauty which we expect in a work of art; and the reader of Donne's *Sermons* in their latest form will be wise if he comes to them expecting to find beauty piecemeal and tarnished though in profusion. He will be wise, too, not to expect too many passages of the same intimate kind as that famous confession in regard to prayer which Mr. Pearsall Smith quotes, and which no writer on Donne can afford not to quote:

I throw myself down in my chamber, and I call in, and invite God, and his angels thither, and when they are there, I neglect God and his Angels, for the noise of a fly, for the rattling of a coach, for the whining of a door. I talk on, in the same posture of praying; eyes lifted up; knees bowed down; as though I prayed to God; and, if God, or his Angels should ask me, when I thought last of God in that prayer, I cannot tell. Sometimes I find that I had forgot what I was about, but when I began to forget it, I cannot tell. A memory of yesterday's pleasures, a fear of to-morrow's dangers, a straw under my knee, a noise in mine ear, a light in mine eye, an anything, a nothing, a fancy, a chimera in my brain troubles me in my prayer.

If Donne had written much prose in this kind, his *Sermons* would be as famous as the writings of any of the saints since the days of the Apostles.

Even as it is, there is no other Elizabethan man of letters whose personality is an island with a crooked shore, inviting us into a thousand bays and creeks and river-mouths, to the same degree as the personality that expressed itself in the poems, sermons, and life of John Donne. It is a mysterious and at times repellent island. It lies only intermittently in the sun. A fog hangs around its coast, and at the base of its most radiant mountain-tops there is, as a rule, a miasma-infested swamp. There are jewels to be found scattered among its rocks and over its surface, and by miners in the dark. It is richer, indeed, in jewels and precious metals and curious ornaments than in flowers. The shepherd on the hillside seldom tells his tale uninterrupted. Strange rites in honour of ancient infernal deities that delight in death are practised in hidden places, and the echo of these reaches him on the sighs of the wind and makes him shudder even as he looks at his

beloved. It is an island with a cemetery smell. The chief figure who haunts it is a living man in a winding-sheet. It is, no doubt, Walton's story of the last days of Donne's life that makes us, as we read even the sermons and the love-poems, so aware of this ghostly apparition. Donne, it will be remembered, almost on the eve of his death, dressed himself in a winding-sheet, "tied with knots at his head and feet," and stood on a wooden urn with his eyes shut, and "with so much of the sheet turned aside as might show his lean, pale, and death-like face," while a painter made a sketch of him for his funeral monument. He then had the picture placed at his bedside, to which he summoned his friends and servants in order to bid them farewell. As he lay awaiting death, he said characteristically, "I were miserable if I might not die," and then repeatedly, in a faint voice, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done." At the very end he lost his speech, and "as his soul ascended and his last breath departed from him he closed his eyes, and then disposed his hands and body into such a posture as required not the least alteration by those that came to shroud him." It was a strange chance that preserved his spectral monument almost uninjured when St. Paul's was burned down in the Great Fire, and no other monument in the cathedral escaped. Among all his fantasies none remains in the imagination more despotically than this last fanciful game of dying. Donne, however, remained in all respects a fantastic to the last, as we may see in that hymn which he wrote eight days before the end, tricked out with queer geography, and so anciently egoistic amid its worship, as in the verse:

> Whilst my physicians by their love are grown
> Cosmographers, and I their map, who lie
> Flat on this bed, that by them may be shown
> That this is my south-west discovery,
> *Per fretum febris*, by these straits to die.

Donne was the poet-geographer of himself, his mistresses, and his God. Other poets of his time dived deeper and soared to greater altitudes, but none travelled so far, so curiously, and in such out-of-the-way places, now hurrying like a nervous fugitive, and now in the exultation of the first man in a new found land.

St. Paul's Cathedral, London — Donne's final resting place

Donne's grave

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